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POEMS,

BY

LOUIS M. GRICE.

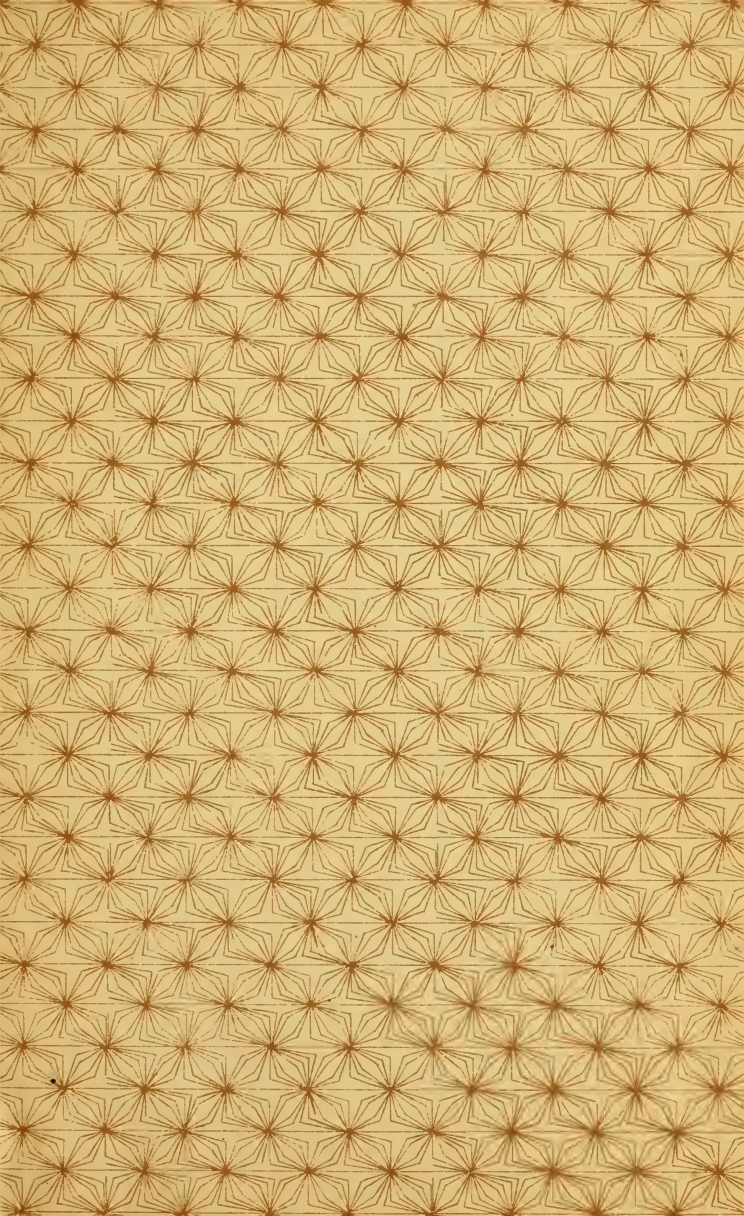
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A
DAUGHTER OF ATHENS.



A
DAUGHTER OF ATHENS.

A Tragedy, in Five Acts.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BARISAS, an Athenian general.
ORESTES, an Athenian captain.
LYCURGUS, an Athenian soldier.
ARCITE, a captain of the Athenian guard.
ALONES, a soldier of the Athenian guard.
Eponymos of Athens.
LEANDER, a Spartan general.
ZELOTES, Leander's lieutenant.
HARMONIS, a Spartan captain.
ARTEMAS, } Spartan guards.
THERON, }
AMPHION, a Spartan messenger.
MYRA, sister to Orestes.
EUNICE, Myra's handmaiden.
Citizens and Soldiers.

SCENE:—*Athens and environs.*

TIME:—*Close of the Peloponnesian War, B. C. 404.*

A
DAUGHTER OF ATHENS.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A public place in Athens, before the Acropolis.*

BARISAS and ORESTES *discovered in conversation.*

BARI. Orestes, hearken, knowest thou that I
Have sought to gain with words of deepest faith,
Thy sister's hand in marriage for the love
That like a quenchless flame within my heart
Burns with a fire that consumes my soul?
And knowest thou, thy sister who hath naught
But matchless beauty and a form divine
To make her worthy in a great man's eyes,
Rejects my suit with cold and scornful words,
And doth assume a most disdainful mien,
Which her position strangely doth belie?

ORES. Although my sister never has possessed
The means to make the glitter and the show—
The pomp that marked the wantons of the state
Ere this dread siege proved all was vanity;
Yet, still she is a lady born and bred;
And by Apollo! I esteem her fit
For any man who calls himself a Greek,
Though he were greatest of our honored state:
Yet, will I thank thee for the honor thou
Hast done my sister, but since 'tis her will
To look with cold disfavor on thy suit,
I can do naught but state my vain regrets.

BARI. In spite of this cold manner she assumes,
She must be mine.

ORES. What dost thou mean by that?

BARI. I mean that thou shalt force her to consent.

ORES. Thou dost forget, it is not of my slave,
But of my sister that you speak, Barisas.

BARI. And what of that? Wouldst thou not have her wed
Unto a man whose name would be the charm
To guide thee on to fortune and to fame?

ORES. If I should prove so base, as to be moved
By all the bribes corruption could conceive,
To violence do unto my sister's trust;
Then might the gods, in justice, on my head
Hurl thunderbolts of vengeance fraught with death.

BARI. Take heed, Orestes, thou shalt rue thy words.

ORES. The words that duty prompts I'll never rue.

BARI. Thy duty should impel thee to persuade
Thy sister to a marriage with thy chief,
And if persuasion failed to have effect,
Thou shouldst compel.

ORES. That will I never do.
She shall alone be keeper of her heart.

BARI. Thou wilt not aid me, then?

ORES. Nay! If thy love
Can strike no chord responsive in the breast
Of her whom thou wouldst win, I will not seek
To plead thy suit; 'twould be of no avail.

BARI. Thou art unruly, as thy sister is.
But I will not be foiled; for though I must
Upon my own devices now depend,
I'll conquer her, and she shall be my bride.

ORES. Herself alone shall rule the issue there,
And woe to him who seeks her injury.

BARI. Have done with this: and now to other things
Of more immediate nature to us both.
We have received important news to-day,
Of an attack the Spartans contemplate
Upon the city; and this bold assault
Is to be led and marshalled by Leander,
The youngest chief who under Ægis serves;
Yet, brave is he, and skilled in arts of war;
And, it is said, he hath been given aid

By Alcibiades, whom I believe .
Would fain rule Athens with a tyrant's sway.
I could not learn the plan of this attack,
But I do fear Leander has conceived
Some way to crush us with his Spartan host;
And therefore, to avert the threatened blow
Impending o'er us like the frown of Ares,
It is determined this bold chief must die.
The dagger is the only means we have
By which to reach him; hence it must be made
The instrument of his destruction.

ORES.

How

Could it assist us were Leander dead?
Lysandros blocks Piræus with his fleet:
Defeat must come although it be delayed;
For even now the whole of Athens groans
With misery, and grim starvation stalks
A gaunt, death-breathing phantom through her streets.

BARI. So long as we can hold the foe at bay,
We are unconquered, unabased, and this
Makes every moment we withstand defeat,
A period of honor. Every chance
That offers Athens one more day's reprieve
From the invader, should be gladly seized.
What true Athenian would not bow his head
Unto the conquest of the monarch death,
Rather than to the Spartan? When we fall,
'Twill be when Athens cannot raise her arm
To strike another blow.

ORES,

My thoughts were turned

Unto our women and our aged men,
And all the sufferings they must endure.

BARI. True, they must suffer; wherefore should they not?
The members of a state must bear her ills,
As they do share her joys; without regard
To sex or age.

ORES.

Thy words are full of truth—

And many women would for Athens die,

If they could serve her thus; yet woful 'tis
To see them slowly starving in our homes.

BARI. 'Twould be more woful—harder to endure,
To see them ravished by victorious foes.

ORES. You stir my soul with rage.

BARI.

Seek not to quell

Its rising passion, for 'twill give thee strength
To strike Leander's death-blow; for the deed
I have assigned to thee. It must be done
Ere three more days are numbered with the past.

ORES. What! I have been selected for the deed?

BARI. Thou hast, Orestes, and thy life may be
In forfeit paid; but you must look to that.
Thou hast thine orders. Be thy work well done.

ORES. When thus commanded I can but obey;
Yet would I rather meet this Spartan chief
In open warfare, for so brave a man
Is worthy of a nobler mode of death
Than by an unseen dagger can be dealt.
Perchance 'twill be within the slumbering camp,
When watch-fires glimmer with uncertain glow
Half in defiance to the dusky shades
That night doth gather from the lap of space;
As brave Leander, in the realm of dreams,
Beholds his martial glory at its height,
That my sharp-bladed dagger shall descend
To shatter all with one death-dealing blow.
It seems a pity, ay, it does, indeed.

BARI. It rather seems thy heart is weak with fear.
If thou wert now the brother of my wife
I might relieve thee of this dangerous work.

ORES. Barisas, you mistake me, 'tis not fear
That moves my heart, but pity, nothing more.
When Athens needs a dagger she will find
This hand will tremble not to grasp its hilt:
Nor will my heart refuse to nerve my arm
To deeds of death, although I have to pass
Through burning Hades to fulfil my work.

I am a soldier, and a soldier's life
Must be like foam upon a billow's crest,
Tossed by the changing of the reckless tides
Till to oblivion by tempests hurled.

BARI. 'Tis well. To-night when shadows congregate
To lend concealment to the darkest deeds,
Thou shalt go forth, a messenger of doom.

ORES. So be it. Zeus lead me to success.
Now will I leave thee till the evening falls,
For ere upon my journey I depart,
I must unto my sister say farewell;
For who can tell, we ne'er may meet again?

Exit ORESTES.

BARI. Ay, go, thou fool! And bid thy last farewell
Unto thy sister; for the last 'twill be,
Unless, perchance she yet consents to buy
With her fair self, thy safety and thy life;
For if this threat will not her spirit bend,
And win my suit where softer words have failed,
Thou shalt, Orestes, go unto thy death;
For if thou canst escape the Spartan swords,
Then art thou more than mortal. 'Thou wilt die.
And I another way will find to woo,
Where kisses and caresses shall be free
And many, though they be the fruit of force.
Ah, lovely Myra, cold and scornful maid,
So passionless and yet so beautiful,
Thy haughty glance, although so fraught with pride,
Enkindles in my heart the flames of love;
Thou shalt be mine with all thy glorious charms:
By Aphrodite's girdle do I swear.

Enter LYCURGUS.

Lycurgus, ho! Thou art the very man
Whom I do most desire to behold.
Thou knowest Myra, sister to Orestes?

LYCUR. I do, Barisas, and by all the light
That shines with splendor from her lustrous eyes,
She is the fairest maid in Athens.

BARI.

True,

But thou dost speak as though thy heart did feel
The fires of a deeply burning love
That only eyes like Myra's can inspire.

LYCUR. Nay, nay, thou dost misjudge me, I regard
This beauteous maid as high above me placed
As Hestia herself; but as the night,
That walks the golden path of brilliant day,
Aspiring from its radiance to catch
The glory bright of some reflected gleam,
Wherewith its own dark spirit to illumine;
So from a distance would I gain the light
Of one sweet smile from Myra's countenance.

BARI. 'Tis well your aspiration ceases there.
Go to the maid and tell her if she would
Her brother save from almost certain death,
She must come hither and confer with me.

LYCUR. I will obey thee.

BARI.

Go, and speed thee well.

Exit LYCURGUS.

There goes a man to whom I would entrust
More than to any of a mortal mould.

*Exit.*SCENE II. *A room in MYRA'S house.*MYRA *discovered gazing through a window.*

MYRA. Ah! here Orestes comes; brave, noble soul!
When he is absent, I do long for him
As would a lady for her lover. He
Has not a rival in his sister's love.

She turns from the window.

What dangers he must undergo; alas!
It chills my heart when e'er I think of it.
I would this cruel war were at an end.

*Enter ORESTES.**She advances to meet him and they join hands.*

ORES. Dear sister, I have come to say farewell.

I have a certain mission to perform,
On which I start to-night; and if perchance,
I should no more return—or if, indeed,
I lose my life in that I undertake,
'Twill be for Athens' sake; so fear thee not,
But ever wear fair virtue's garb that clings
Like some rich veil of modest maidenhood
About thy soul—the throne of purity.

MYRA. Orestes, thy strange words inspire fear,
And dread foreboding in my troubled breast;
O, thinkest thou, if thou wert torn from me,
Whom could I turn to when I need a friend?
Without a mother, whose much needed care
Has been denied me from the day of birth;
Deprived of father by this dreadful war,
In which he fell upon a bloody field,
And now to have thee—last of those I love,
Torn from my side to leave me desolate!
It is too much, even for Athens' sake.

ORES. Thou shouldst not speak in this distracted strain;
Lift thou thy soul above these weak emotions
And fill thy breast with patriotic fire;
And when thy spirit rises with the flood
Of love inborn for thy dear native land,
Imagine then, thyself a warrior,
And lo! behold poor Athens as she is,
Beset and tortured by the cruel fangs
Of those who rather should have been her friends,
Than thus have made themselves her enemies;
Till forced at bay upon her sacred soil,
Subject to want and misery untold
Imposed by all the horrors of a siege,
She totters, weak and helpless, soon to fall,
Wounded and bleeding in the Spartan's grasp.
If thou couldst feel these things with all the weight
With which they bear upon my anxious soul,
Thou, as a willing sacrifice wouldst give
A thousand brothers, if the chance were thine,

To fight and die for this, our honored state.

MYRA. Alas, I'm but a woman, weak and frail,
And cannot feel as thou dost over this;
I only think of thee, Orestes. Ah,
Thy life is dear to me as is my own.

ORES. There is no remedy; it must be so.

MYRA. How my poor heart is throbbing with the pain
That vibrates through my soul.

(She weeps.)

ORES. My sister dear,
It grieves me much to see thee sobbing so,
Canst thou not have a braver spirit?

MYRA. Nay,
Not while thou art commissioned to thy death.

ORES. But this is useless, Myra, though thou didst
Shed more tears than the weeping Niobe,
'Twould be of no avail, but rather serve
To make my heart as womanish as thine,
When it for duty should be cold and stern.

MYRA. Thou speakest truly; oh, how weak I am,
That I should burden thee with tears and sighs,
Instead of giving thee encouragement.
Forgive me, brother, I will dry my tears;
See, I have done so, and no more will I
Make heavier thy burden than it is,
Although my heart doth break.

ORES. Now art thou brave;
A sister worthy of a warrior;
But take encouragement, for though my task
Be perilous, I safely may return.

MYRA. The gods in mercy grant it may be so.

ORES. Within three days thou shalt the issue know,
And how the fate of Athens rests with me.

MYRA. Oh, what an age those days will prove for me.

ORES. And now farewell, my sister, henceforth keep
Thy spirit brave. To the immortal gods
Do I commit thee; may they guard thee well.

MYRA. Farewell, Orestes.

Exit ORESTES.

Oh! alas! he's gone!

How can I help but weep in my distress?

*She sinks down weeping.**Enter EUNICE.*EUNICE. My mistress, there is one, Lycurgus, who
Awaits to see thee.MYRA. (*Starting up.*) And whence comes he, pray?

EUNICE. He brings a message by Barisas sent.

MYRA. Barisas? Go, I will not hear it then;
I am in no mood for his court; but stay,
It may concern Orestes; I should know;
Yes, bid him enter.*Exit EUNICE.**Enter LYCURGUS.*

LYCUR. Greeting, gentle Myra.

MYRA. Greeting to thee, Lycurgus. Come you from
Barisas?LYCUR. Ay, and he this message sent:
That if thou wouldst from death, Orestes save,
Thou shouldst come unto him without delay.

MYRA. What can he mean, Lycurgus, dost thou know?

LYCUR. Nay, Myra.

MYRA. Wilt thou lead me to thy chief?

LYCUR. I will, fair lady, art thou ready, now?

MYRA. Yes, lead the way, nor pause to spare my breath.
Hermes himself were not too swift for me,
If with my anxious heart my feet kept pace.*Exeunt.*SCENE III. *Same as Scene I.*BARISAS *discovered in waiting.**Enter LYCURGUS accompanied by MYRA.*LYCUR. Barisas, thy commands I have obeyed,
And for thy further orders now await.BARI. Thou hast done well. Go thou and wait my call,
Exit LYCURGUS.

My greeting, Myra, do I tender thee.

MYRA. Barisas, hither have I come to learn
The import of thy message strange.

BARI. 'Tis this;
That if thou wouldst Orestes save from death,
It is within thy power.

MYRA. By our gods!
But tell me what this dreaded mission is,
And I, although a woman, timid, weak,
For dear Orestes sake, will take the sword,
Assume the habit of a warrior,
Perform the duties you've assigned to him,
And follow every detail to its end,
Though its fulfilment bear me unto death.

BARI. Nay, no such sacrifice will needed be.

MYRA. Oh! speak, and tell me what your words portend.

BARI. Ah, Myra, thou dost know how all my soul
Is thrilling with the love I bear for thee.

MYRA *raises her hand to interrupt him.*

Nay, hear me through. By Aphrodite's doves!

If thou wilt but consent to be my wife,
Then I thy brother's life will save, for he
Shall of this work of danger be relieved.

MYRA. What! thinkest thou that I would thus be wooed
By covert threats aimed at my brother's life?
Now can I see how all this came to pass;
It was thy hand deep-dyed in villainy,
That gave this dread commission unto him,
That thou mightst use his life, thus placed at stake,
To hold in ransom for his sister's love.

BARI. And if 'tis so, wilt thou the ransom pay,
Or rather see thy brother go to death?

MYRA. Since I do know thee, thou ignoble man,
For what thou art, a traitor, vile, accurst,
Using the public trust assigned to thee
In base corruption for thy private ends,
And that when Athens most needs honest men:
Why, by the majesty of all the gods!

Far rather with my own hand would I plunge
This dagger deep into my throbbing heart,
Than marry such a creature as thou art.

BARI. And is it thus you answer me? Perchance
You shall yet plead for mercy at my feet;
For I will crush thy spirit, haughty maid,
And teach thee what an honor is my love.

MYRA. Thy threats are vain, I'll plead my righteous cause
To the Eponymos; I'll go at once,
And tell him of thy most unrighteous schemes,
And see if he will not redress my wrongs.

Exit MYRA.

BARI. So be it. Now, Orestes, thou shalt die,
Then of thy sister I'll possession take.
O god of love, if I did hear aright,
She'd die for him, yet would not live for me;
But ere another day is dead, her tongue
Shall change its scornfulness to pleading tones.
Lycurgus! ho! come hither!

Enter LYCURGUS.

LYCUR. Ay, Barisas,
I wait thy will. How can I serve thee now?

BARI. * Lycurgus, I have something to perform—
A deep laid plan, and I will need thine aid.
As thou dost know, I love fair Myra, she,
Cold, haughty creature, proudly scorns my suit;
To-night her brother will the city leave,
It may be, never to return; therefore,
While good Orestes goes to meet his fate,
We'll steal the maiden. Dost thou understand?

LYCUR. Barisas, but too well I understand,
But I will never aid thee in thy plot.

BARI. Why, how is this, Lycurgus? I once thought
That thou didst love me.

LYCUR. And I also thought
Thou wert too honorable e'er to think
Of such a deed.

BARI. 'Tis but a ruse of love.

When I obtain possession of the maid,
She will consent to marriage soon enough.

LYCUR. Barisas, nay, it is a villain's deed,
Most cowardly and foul.

BARI. Lycurgus, hold!
Dost thou forget that once upon a field
Of blood and carnage, where it seemed the form
Of Ares cast his shadow o'er our lines,
That thou didst stand, hemmed in on every side
By foes who fought with fierce, untiring zeal,
Until thy sword was broken in thy hand,
And you, exhausted from the loss of blood
That gushed in torrents from thy many wounds,
Sank to the ground; when, with uplifted sword,
A Spartan chief stood aiming at thy life?
But ere his blade descended to thy heart,
Dost thou remember how I stayed his arm
By death far swifter than his own design?
And dost remember how I stood by thee,
Risking my own life in defence of thine,
Until thy foes were beaten back or slain?
Dost thou remember that, Lycurgus?

LACUR. Yes,
'Tis written on the tablet of my brain,
In characters of fire.

BARI. Even so;
And hast forgotten that you swore to serve
Barisas, thy preserver, all through life,
And blindly follow whither he might lead?

LYCUR. Nay, I remember all.

BARI. And canst thou **now**
Refuse this service that I ask of thee?

LYCÉE. Were I not bound to thee, I would **refuse**;
But since you have appealed unto my oath,
I must perforce obey. Barisas, oh!
'Twere better hadst thou left me on that **field**,
To die in honor, than to use me thus,
The helpless instrument of villainy:

But thou didst say that thou wouldst marry her;
Swear it shall be so; swear by all the gods
That you will not dishonor her, or else
I will not serve thee, though a thousand oaths
Bound me to it.

BARI. I swear it shall be so.
Come to my house to-night; till then, farewell.

LYCUR. Farewell. (*Aside.*) And may the gods o'er
Myra watch.

Exit LYCURGUS.

BARI. For such a creature as fair Myra is,
I'd be forsworn a hundred thousand times;
My plan is laid, and if it but succeeds,
Then all the world shall not foil my designs.

Exit.

SCENE IV. *Audience Chamber in the house of the
EPONYMOS of Athens.*

The EPONYMOS is discovered seated.

Enter MYRA, conducted by attendants.

MYRA. Eponymos, most noble and most just,
In humble supplication do I come;
I have a grievance, which by all that's right,
I pray thou wilt redress.

EPON. Speak, maiden, speak,
And let me know what wrong is done to thee.

MYRA. The general, Barisas, spoke to me
Of love and marriage: I, in action true
Unto the pure dictation of my heart,
Refused his suit; and now, with curst intent,
To force me into this unwelcome union,
He hath my brother given to perform
Some dreadful task that leads him unto death;
And as a ransom for his safety claims
The love which I refuse; therefore, I come,
Eponymos, to thee, and humbly ask
That thou wilt see this wrong is set aright.

EPON. Who art thou, maiden?

MYRA. Myra is my name:

A gentle-woman, native of this state.

EPON. And who thy brother?

MYRA. One, Orestes, who,

By ardent service and his valiant deeds,

Hath won the rank of captain.

EPON. Yes, 'tis true:

Thy brother I remember well indeed:

He hath served Athens well, and bravely too,

Yet am I powerless to save him now.

MYRA. Oh! canst thou not some other soldier find

Who would essay this work with all the zeal

That moves Orestes, yet, who would not leave

A weeping sister to forever mourn

The one on whom alone she did depend?

EPON. If the Eponymos shou'd raise his hand

To undo work a general had done,

What unity of action could exist

Between the army and the government?

Already has the state too often been

The scene of inward strife: ambitious men,

With petty jealousies, dissensions, quarrels,

Have done more harm to Athens than her foes;

And in such sad and troubled times as these,

No question should arise in government,

To make the burden that the state doth bear,

More cumbersome and crushing than it is.

MYRA, *weeping, is led out by attendants.*

Exit EPONYMOS.



ACT II.

SCENE I. *Front of MYRA'S house.*

MYRA and EUNICE discovered at the door.

MYRA. Oh, Eunice, since the sun in glory sank
 Deep in the boundless wilderness of space,
 To leave the day in conquest of the night;
 A weight of evil hath my brain oppressed:
 For it was then Orestes was to start
 Upon his work of danger, and perchance,
 Of death. O wretched, wretched, is my soul.
 Ah, Eunice, I have never felt like this,
 When stood Orestes, while the battle raged,
 In mortal combat for his country's good;
 For then he had a soldier's chance of life,
 And could upon his sword and shield depend;
 But now it seems he goes to sacrifice
 His life in some strange and mysterious way,
 That he may thereby benefit the state.
 O, it is woful, to the last degree!

EUNICE. Perchance the evil is not half so great
 As thou dost fear.

MYRA. Alas! I would 'twere so;
 But all my spirit doth foreshadow ill.

EUNICE. Lo! gentle mistress, dost thou not behold
 Yonder a Greek, who swiftly comes this way?

MYRA. I do; it is Lycurgus: what strange chance
 Can bring him here at such a time of night?

Enter LYCURGUS.

What news hast thou, Lycurgus?

LYCUR. Evil news:
 I bring thee tidings of Orestes.

MYRA. Speak,
 And quickly tell me all. What dreadful ill
 Hath overtake him? I fear the worst.

LYCUR. He hath been wounded, almost unto death,
And now is lying in a certain house,
Some distance from this place: he sent for thee—
Although the hour is late, if thou wilt go,
I will conduct thee unto him at once.

MYRA. 'This very instant I'll depart with thee!
Oh, how my troubled heart doth palpitate
With bitter anguish, as I think of him,
His life-blood ebbing from a cruel wound.
O lead me unto him at once, I pray!

EUNICE. My mistress, shall I not go with thee, too?

LYCUR. Nay, none but Myra, did Orestes wish
Should come unto him.

MYRA. So it shall be, then.

Exit EUNICE in house.

Come, lead the way, that I may reach his side.

Exeunt.

SCENE II. *A chamber in the house of BARISAS.*

Enter MYRA and LYCURGUS.

LYCUR. This is our destination.

MYRA. Oh! Alas!

Orestes! my poor brother! where is he?

LYCURGUS is silent.

You surely said I'd find him here; and yet,

I do not see him.

LYCURGUS remains silent.

Good Lycurgus, speak;

Where is Orestes? I implore thee, tell!

LYCURGUS still remains silent.

O! canst thou stand there silent, when my heart

Is breaking with such great anxiety?

Where is Orestes? I command thee, speak!

LYCUR. The tale I told thee of thy brother's ills,

Was but a base decoy, wherewith to lead

Thine unsuspecting steps unto this house,

And here imprison thee.

MYRA.

What treachery!

My maddene I brain doth seem to lose its poise.

LYCUR. Indeed, 'tis true; thou art a captive here.

MYRA. Where is Orestes, whom thou didst declare
Lay dying at this place?

LYCUR. I must confess
I cannot tell thee aught of him, save this—
He's not in Athens.

MYRA. So I am deceived,
And ruthlessly betrayed! O, Niobe!
Was ever fate more pitiful than mine?

LYCUR. (*Aside.*) Oh bitter thought, that tells my wretch-
ed heart,

I am the author of her misery!

MYRA. Thou say'st I am a captive?

LYCUR. Yes; thou art.

MYRA. What is thy purpose? and whose house is this?

LYCUR. Barisas is the master here.

MYRA. Ye gods!

Oh, grant me thy protection!

LYCUR. Fear thee not;
Thine honor shall at least be well preserved.

MYRA. Mine honor, dost thou say? Accursed wretch!
You know, already 'tis in peril placed
By your false action. Oh, how low and vile
Is that man who will wring a woman's heart,
With faithless tales of woe and misery
That have befallen those whom she doth love;
That he may through the tender medium
Of her affection and solicitude,
Lead her to ruin and perchance to death:
For by the attributes of all our gods!
I swear I'd rather be the bride of death
Than wed dishonor.

LYCUR. (*Drawing his dagger.*) And I'd rather thou
Wouldst plunge this dagger in my aching heart,
Than thus reproach me with such bitter words,
And yet with so much justice. Take the blade,
And strike, but let the blow be quick and strong.

MYRA. Nay; I am not an executioner
Who deals out justice with a hand of iron,
And smiles to see his victims' agonies.
But oh, why hast thou thus ensnared me? Ah,
Why hast thou proved thyself to be so base
To take advantage of a woman's trust,
And use her confidence for her disgrace?

LYCUR. O Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos!
Why was I ever born, thus to be placed
Between two wrongs and forced to make a choice?
An oath is sacred; so is woman's trust:
'To keep the first, I have the last abused,
And basely thus deceived the one for whom
I willingly would die. Ye cruel Fates,
Thus to misrule!

MYRA. What say you of an oath?
What can the meaning of your strange words be?

LYCUR. Oh, Myra, this false deed that I have done,
Was much against my will. Barisas, once
Did save my life upon a battle field,
Where death seemed certain as the touch of fate;
And I, in gratitude for his brave deed,
Swore I would serve him till my day of death,
And do his bidding, though it cost the life
He had redeemed; and now I find, too late,
That treachery abides in noble breasts,
For he was noble, though the bitter pangs
Of disappointed love have made him base.

MYRA. Lycurgus, though you've done me grievous
wrong,

Yet, still I have misjudged thee; for I see
Thy true and noble nature was the bond
That forced thee, helpless, to fulfil thine oath,
And thus, in doing right, commit a wrong.
As for Barisas, who is called a Greek,
But who outrages such a noble name,
Far more than ever do I hate him now.
Yet how, alas, shall I escape him, pray?

LYCUR. He swore to me thine honor would be safe.

MYRA. Indeed I trust him not; his evil soul
Hath some fell purpose lurking in its depths.
O wilt thou not assist me to escape?

LYCUR. You must stay here: I cannot break my oath,
Unless Barisas first proves false to me.

I will protect thee: by the gods, I swear;
For if Barisas thy dishonor seeks,
Then shall he die, and that by my own hand,

MYRA. If thou shouldst fail me, also do I swear
That ere the blush of shame shall taint my cheek,
I'll sacrifice my life.

LYCUR. The gods avert
That dread calamity. Shouldst thou need aid,
I'll hearken unto thee; therefore, I pray,
If danger threatens, summon me at once.

MYRA. Thy words inspire courage in my breast.

LYCUR. I will not fail thee: Themis be my judge.

Exit LYCURGUS.

MYRA. Despite his promise to protect me, still
My poor heart throbs with terror and with dread.

What can the purpose of Barisas be?
I dare not think, lest I perchance conceive
That which I fear to dream of. Cursed chance
That ever saw me led to such a snare.

Alas, 'tis cruel! Oh, my heart will break.
Ah, bitter day, wouldst thou had never dawned.
Grim danger casts its shadow o'er my path,
And chills my soul with fear.

Enter BARISAS, who, unseen by MYRA, stands watching her.

Immortal gods!

In mercy hear me, and protect me now:
O throw thy shields before me, and thy swords
Uplift in my defence. Your powers sway
To aid a helpless maiden in despair.

BARI. (*Coming forward.*) Fair Myra, art thou calling
on the gods?

Why prayest thou?

MYRA. I have much need of prayer,
When in the power of a man whose aim,
Is that of wronging help'less maidenhood.

BARI. Nay, nay, I would not harm the one I love.

MYRA. Speak not to me of love, thou knowest well
That love between us never can exist.
I could not love thee, though I spent my life
In trying.

BARI. So perchance you think, but I
May find a way by which to make thee love.

MYRA. Not only hast thou proved thyself to be
A villain, but thou art a coward too,
Thus to insult a woman who doth stand
Weak and defenceless in thy power placed.
A woman's weakness rather should appeal
Unto a true man's honor, and should gain
Protection for her when she is distressed,
And not serve as a warrant for abuse.

BARI. How glorious thine eyes in anger are,
Disc'osing passions slumbering in thy soul,
Whose fires have till now been unrevealed.
By all the gods, thou art more beautiful
In this thy rage, than when thou art composed.
Storm on, sweet one, you please my fancy thus.

MYRA. Thou wouldst not for thy life address me so,
Were but Orestes in the city's bounds.

BARI. But he is not where he can aid thee now,
Most lovely Myra.

MYRA. When he doth return,
He shall be made aware of this, and thou
Shalt dearly pay for all the suffering
Which you have caused me.

BARI. He will ne'er return;
E'en now he may be locked in death's embrace;
And so you see that there are none to stand
Between us now.

MYRA. Alas! it may be true

That he is dead. Oh! if thou hast a heart
That e'er was moved by pity's gentle touch:
Here do I kneel before thee, and implore,
That self-same pity may but move thee now
To set me free, and let me from thy house
Depart in safety. Thinkest, if thou hadst
A sister who was most to thee on earth,
And thou wert forced, in duty's stern behalf,
To leave her unprotected for a time;
If thou shouldst to thy home return again,
And find that sister subject to the schemes
Of some base-minded lover: if 'twere so.
How wouldst thou feel? What agonies of grief;
What throes of rage thy bosom would convulse.
And wouldst thou rest until the life of him
Who wronged thee, paid the forfeit for his crime?
Barisas, think thou, of this cursed deed,
And let its sadness be for me a shield,
And gain my liberty.

BARI. Once did I say
That thou shouldst plead for mercy at my feet.

MYRA. (*Rising.*) I see thou art as heartless as a stone.

BARI. Nay, nay, there dost thou wrong me, for despite
The coldness you've bestowed upon my suit;
The scorn with which you've heard me plead my love:
Despite all this; my passion is as deep:
My love intense as ever, when I gaze
Into those flashing, lustrous orbs of thine.
In proof of this, I still do offer thee
A marriage honorable; Myra, love,
Give thy consent, and by our sacred gods,
Within an hour it shall be fulfilled.

MYRA. What you propose, outrages every right
Most sacred unto woman; you would force
A union on me which I would detest.

BARI. And so, you will not thus united be?

MYRA. Nay; 'twould be torture where there should be
bliss.

BARI. Then, scornful maiden, I will move thy heart,
 An I make it answer mine, else shall it break;
 For I will teach thee what it is to love;
 Here in my arms, and here upon my breast,
 Thou shalt the lesson, though unwilling, learn.

MYRA. Remorseless wretch! lay not thy hands on me!
 Forbear! by Themis, I will call for help.

BARI. It would avail thee nothing, fairest one:
 Nay, Myra, thou art mine, and there are none
 Who shall dispute my claim. (*He attempts to take her in his arms.*)

MYRA. Thou dastard! back!

He clasps her struggling form to his breast.

Lycurgus! help! oh, help! Lycurgus! help!

BARI. You shriek in vain: you may as well submit;
 For none will aid thee.

MYRA. I will aid myself!

She snatches his dagger from his side and stabs him.

Take that! base ravisher!

BARI. Almighty gods!

Oh! woman, you have killed me! I am slain—
 Accurst be thou—Oh, misery—I die. (*Dies.*)

MYRA. What have I done? It seems as though a dream
 Of untold horror had enchained my soul.

Enter LYCURGUS.

LYCUR. What goes amiss? Great Zeus and his Queen!
 What do I here behold? Barisas stabbed?
 And growing cold in death? 'Tis even so.

MYRA. And 'twas my hand that dealt the fatal blow
 Which saved my honor; but my bosom heaves
 With torture at the thought of what I've done.

LYCUR. Thou hast done right, for well did he deserve
 The fate which you've bestowed—but you must fly:
 For hark! the soldiers have the tumult heard—
 Thy shrieks and cries, and now do search the house
 To know the cause: they must not find thee here;
 For if they learn 'twas you who killed their chief,
 Thy sex will not preserve thee from their swords.

'Twill be some minutes ere they reach this spot;
For many chambers will they havè to search
Ere they pause here—this is so far removed
From all the rest; so, if thou art discreet,
Thou wilt have ample time for thine escape:
Here is a secret passage; follow this,
And it will lead thee safely to the street.

MYRA. But whither shall I fly?

LYCUR. At least, from here;
And it were better if from Athens too.

MYRA. And what of thou, Lycurgus? what of thou?

LYCUR. I will remain to meet the soldiers here;
And with false tales mislead them—thus to foil
All efforts at detection and pursuit.
So fly at once, lest it should be too late.

MYRA. My troubled heart beats heavy in my breast,
And I am far more fit to faint than fly.
But courage: I will summon all my strength
For this one effort to escape. Farewell.

Exit MYRA.

LYCUR. Farewell, sweet Myra: what I now shall do
Will be for thy dear sake, and may the gods
Look with approval on the sacrifice.
And thou, cold form, that lies so silent there,
Inanimate in death, that once in life,
So full of vigor and of action was,
Thy mortal life hath reached its mortal end,
And death is now the tenant of thy parts.
That arm, that once the sword in battle raised
To crush thy foes beneath its giant force,
Now lies unnerved, with all its power fled.
That brain, once skilled in subtle arts of war,
And versed in all the intrigues of the state,
Is now forever to inaction doomed.
That voice, that once, with loud and stern command,
Rang clarion-toned above the battle's din,
To lead the way to glory and renown,
Will nevermore be heard; death chains the tongue,

That eye, that could so flash and burn with rage,
 And flame with love, is now devoid of light.
 That breast, where such a burning passion dwelt,
 No more will heave with rapture, nor with woe.
 The mortal link that bound thee unto earth,
 Was broken by a woman's feeble hand.
 Of woman born, thou didst a woman love.
 And woman proved thy ruin and thine end:
 Yet thou didst but receive the just reward
 Due thy base treachery. This is the blade
 That Myra plunged into thy throbbing heart.
 O life, on what a little thing you hang.
 But hark! here is Arcite with the guard:
 I pray the gods that Myra hath escaped.

Enter ARCITE, ALONES and Soldiers with drawn swords.

ARCI. What means this wild tumult, Lycurgus, pray?
 We heard a woman's shriek and sounds confused,
 As if a struggle were in progress here—
 And then, a fall: what means it? Death and doom!
 There lies our chief, Barisas: raise him, quick!
 Some cursed treason hath been working here.

ALO. Ye gods! his breast is bathed in tides of blood!
 He hath been stabbed! his heart is still! he's dead!

ARCI. Stabbed? dead? foul treason! who hath done this
 deed?

Whoe'er it be shall die: Lycurgus, speak;
 Tell us if thou dost know the guilty one,
 That we may visit vengeance on his head.

LYCUR. Behold him here; I am the guilty one.

ARCI. What, thou, Lycurgus? thou?

LYCUR. I am the one.

ARCI. Thou, who of all men, should have been the last
 To do this deed?

LYCUR. The deed was done by me.

ARCI. Oh, traitorous wretch, thou standest there con-
 fessed

Of this vile crime, and not a flush of shame
 Mounts to thy cheek.

LYCUR. There sometimes is a need
When one perforce must kill his dearest friend
For honor's sake; when, with the stroke of death,
He seems to pierce his own heart through and through.

ARCI. Accurst assassin, daring to assume
The garb of virtue for so foul a crime!
My sword shall blush to drink thy traitor's blood:
Die, treason with thee!

LYCUR. Hold! Arcite, hold!
And hear me speak

ARCI. Nay, such a heart as thine,
Ungrateful, base, should never be allowed
To prompt its treason to a traitor's tongue.

LYCUR. (*Drawing his sword.*) Stand back, I say! and
let me prove to thee
'That I am worthy to be called a Greek.
I swear to thee, this act which I have done,
Was for the sake of honor: that alone.
I am a true Athenian, by the gods!
And I my own heart rather would have pierced,
And shed my blood in sacrificial tides,
Than that of him who lies before thee dead,
Had honor not been in the issue placed.
But, what is life when honor is at stake?
For, honor do I count of greater worth
Than friendship, love and all the sacred ties
That serve to bind us to this mortal world,
With links of common sympathy and joy.
Know then, 'twas wounded honor, whose redress
Required the commission of this deed.
Barisas threatened that more dear than life,
And therefore, paid the penalty of death.
Ye fain would know the purport of our quarrel;
But that, eternity alone shall hold
In its unsearchable and silent depths,
For 'twas of private nature to us both
Ye know a woman was in it concerned,
But who she is, none save myself do know.

And I will take the secret to my grave.
 Think what ye will of that which I have done,
 At least I'll prove no coward's craven blood
 Doth course in baseness through my swelling veins;
 I'll prove to ye, the smallest spark of life
 Within my being, trembles not at death.
 Death is a gentle sleep, in which the soul
 Dreams through eternity; why then, should dread
 'The bosom animate at death's approach?
 I welcome death as nature's dearest friend,
 For 'tis a sure release from all the ills
 That in this life have grown too hard to bear.
 By Pallas and Apollo! thus I strike!
 To show ye how a true-born Greek may die.

Stabs himself and falls.

Come death, and bear my waiting soul away
 Unto that slumberous realm that mystic lies
 Beyond the portals of mortality. (*Dies.*)

SCENE III. *Same as Scene I.*

Enter MYRA.

MYRA. O Eunice! Eunice! come, thy mistress calls!

Enter EUNICE from house.

EUNICE. Hast thou returned? What of my master, pray?

MYRA. Oh, Eunice, in the hour that has passed
 Since we last parted, I have suffered much;
 Such agonies of mind, and such despair—
 Such pain and anguish have my spirit crushed
 Beneath their woes, that it seems wondrous strange
 I am not raving mad!

EUNICE. My lady, dear,
 What means this strange and agitated speech?
 Thy brother is not dead?

MYRA. Alas! alas!
 I cannot tell, for I have seen him not.

EUNICE. How can this be? Why, something is amiss :
 When thou didst leave, thine object was to reach
 The bedside of my lord.

MYRA. Yes, so I thought;
But it was all a base, deceitful lie,
Forged but for my dishonor, which to save,
I slew the wretch, Barisas, to whose house
I was decoyed for purposes so foul.

EUNICE. I am amazed at finding there exists
Such perfidy in Athens!

MYRA. Seeming virtue
Doth cover up a world of guilt and sin.

EUNICE. O my poor mistress, what you have endured!

MYRA. Nor is it at an end, for I must fly,
Even from Athens; for, if 'tis revealed
That I've deprived the army of a chief.
Great as Barisas was in feats of war,
My life will be in danger; but alas!
I know not whither in my need to turn
And seek for shelter.

EUNICE. This is sad indeed.
Oh, that my lord were here to guard thee now.

MYRA. He may be in the kingdom of the dead;
And 'twould be better if I too were there.
This is a cruel world in which we live.

EUNICE. Ah, speak not so, dear mistress, nor despond;
For yet thy brother may return to thee,
Oh, be assured; and now I have a plan
Which, though mad-thoughted you perchance may deem,
At least will lead thee from the danger here,
That hangs o'er thee immediate and dark.

MYRA. What is it, pray? for aught you may suggest,
I will consent to.

EUNICE. Hear me then: 'tis this—
That we disguise as pages; in that garb.
We'll fly at once unto the Spartan camp.
There tell some tale of wrong we have endured
Here in our native city; then we'll swear,
In spirit of revenge we come to join
The army that opposes Athens' sway,
And serve as pages to the Spartan chiefs.

The story will partake of much that's true,
Although not wholly so.

MYRA.

It shall be done.

Thy mind is rich with ideas as bright
As all the beauteous light that golden gleams
From yonder star, that sits, in glory throned,
Based on the majesty of boundless space.
Already do I feel my pulses rise,
My heart beat quick and faster as I think
Of this adventure, for it thrills my soul
With that intoxication, which so marks
The gambler, as on ruin's brink he stands,
And stakes his all upon a single throw.
With spirit I will enter in the scheme.
It now is long past midnight; ere the dawn
Shall flush the East with softest rosy hues,
We must be gone. Come, Eunice, and prepare.

Exeunt in house.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Spartan Camp. LEANDER'S tent.*

ZELOTES, HARMONIS and Soldiers *discovered drinking and conversing.*

ZELO. Apollo's chariot of fire mounts
High into heaven; iridescent light,
Resplendent, blazes from the flaming wheels,
And colors all the East; the coursers' hoofs
Strike dazzling sparks of glory from their path,
Whose flashes bright, by Zephyrus are caught,
And formed into a brilliant diadem,
To crown the brow of Hemera. Nature starts,
Released from Hypnos, Morpheus and Nyx,
And thrills with new-born life and majesty.
O'er hill and valley; golden sun-beams fly
On gleaming pinions of celestial light,
And with sweet kisses, from the realm of sleep
Awaken all the flowers. And the day
Is merged in splendor that grows more intense
With each advancing step that Cronus makes.
Thus, quickly pass the hours, and our chief
Still tarries; it was yester-night he went
To ho'd a private council with the king,
Concerning the assault that's close at hand,
And which, if but success doth grace our swords,
Will level Athens to the very dust,
And place her at the mercy of our state.
But I would know what keeps Leander so;
He left before the night-watch had begun,
And hath not yet returned.

HARMO. King Ægis is
So active and so tireless a man,
That when he meets one of Leander's kind,
Who of the royal disposition seems

To be a part—so like in mood are they;
 Why, both forget the swift increase of time;
 And thus, the night spreads out her sable wings,
 Spangled and gleaming with the countless stars,
 And soars in darkness to the silent past;
 And day appears, to startle both the chiefs
 From their deep-thoughted plans of victory.

ZELO. You truly speak; if we except the king,
 Leander is the greatest general
 That Sparta boasts; not only in the plan,
 Where he displays such splendid qualities,
 But in the raging battle he excels.

HARMO. (*Raising his cup.*) We'll drink success unto
 this bold attempt
 To conquer Athens; may it crown our arms
 With glory, and our state with deathless fame.

SOLDIERS. Success and victory!

HARMO. Ay, that's the cry—
 But lo! the guards approach with prisoners.

*Enter MYRA and EUNICE disguised as pages, under guard
 of ARTEMAS and THERON.*

MYRA. I pray thee, loose thy hold upon my wrist;
 It is not iron, that you should clutch it so!

ARTE. Force is a law which soldiers must observe.

MYRA. It should not be so, when by gentler means,
 They could as well accomplish their designs.

THERON. Come, come, why dost thou lag?

EUNICE. Alas! you take
 Such giant strides, I cannot keep thy pace.

ZELO. Artemas, what means this? Whom hast thou
 brought?

ARTE. This morning, as I went to change the guard
 That had grown weary with the tedious watch,
 That duty bound them to throughout the night,
 I saw these two Athenians, hand in hand,
 Come walking toward the camp, and by their dress,
 I knew from whence they came; I therefore thought
 They must be spies, or of that character—

Although they do protest it is not so—
Hence, prisoners I straightway made them, and
Have brought them hither, so thou couldst thyself
Judge of the way 'tis best to deal with them.

ZELO. Why were ye found so near our camp?

MYRA. Art thou,

The sole commander here?

ZELO. Nay, I am not,
But in the absence of our general,
I am by him appointed to command.

MYRA. Then I'll not answer thee, for what I tell,
Must be unto the general alone.

ZELO. If thou hast aught to tell, thou'lt find in me
A willing auditor.

MYRA. Nay, 'tis thy chief
With whom I would confer, and he alone.

ZELO. (*To EUNICE.*) And what hast thou to say?

EUNICE. My
master there,

Speaks for us both; I do abide by him.

ZELO. Then shall ye both in close confinement wait
Until our chief returns. (*To ARTEMAS and THERON.*)

Take them away,

And guard them with the strictest vigilance,
'Till further orders you receive from me.

Exeunt ARTEMAS and THERON, with MYRA and EUNICE.

How weak and craven these Athenians look;
Not half the men that we of Sparta are;
It seems to me that all their time is spent
In dressing, and attendance at the baths,
And all those arts best suited to the mind
Of fickle woman, and her vanity.
'Twere better far if they with skilful sports,
Befitted to the sturdy heart of man,
Would mould their bodies into frames of iron,
And thus, with courage, constitute themselves
The bone, the sinew and the life of war.

HARMO. Zelotes, but too often have I found

These pallid youths, whom you seem to despise
As too effeminate for warriors,
To be like fifty furies, in the fight,
Armed with swords of fierce and quenchless flame,
And leaping, raging, thirsting for my blood.
And often I have counted life as lost,
When some chance intervened to change my fate.

ZELO. Perchance 'twas so with thee.

HARMO. What dost thou mean?

ZELO. What I have said; perchance 'twas so with thee.

HARMO. A coward's sneer lies covert in thy words.

ZELO. Harmonis, since thou wouldst my meaning know,
Learn then, 'tis this: that when a craven's sword
Is raised against another's, then the fight
Is just as desperate and hardly fought,
As when two giants, reeling to and fro,
Strike mighty blows that to the skies resound,
Until the earth shakes with the deadly strife
Caused by their struggles.

HARMO. Now, by Hercules!

Thy life shall answer for this gross insult. (*Draws his sword and rushes on ZELOTES, who also draws his, and they fight.*)

Enter ARTEMAS.

ARTE. Harmonis, hold! Zelotes, sheath thy sword!
Cease this contention, for Leander comes.

HARMO. Another time will we this quarrel arrange.

ZELO. When it may suit thee, I shall ready be.

They sheath their swords.

Enter LEANDER.

LEAN. What hath gone wrong? I thought as I approached,
There was commotion here.

ZELO. Good general,

Two prisoners were brought in by the guards,
Whom I this very instant did commit
Unto confinement till thou shouldst return;
This is the only event that has passed
Since thy departure; this confusion was

What thou didst note.

LEAN. Who are these prisoners?

ZELO. Athenians both: a master and his slave,
Who claim to have some business with thee;
And they were taken coming to the camp;
I am at fault if they prove not to be
Spies, plotters or assassins.

LEAN. Bring the one
Who seems to be the master unto me,
And I will find what purpose he may have.

ZELO. But wilt thou not recruit thy wasted strength,
With restful slumber, ere thou dost assume
The burden of thine office?

LEAN. Morpheus
Shall rule me not until my troubled mind
Is freed from all its care.

ZELO. I'll go at once
And bring the prisoner.

Exit ZELOTES.

LEAN. A soldier's rest
Is never found, unless it be the grave;
And yet, what glory marks his fierce career,
Although it be a path of blood and death.
Not one of ye would change his sword and shield
For mines of gold: do I not speak aright?

SOLDIERS. Ay, general.

HARMO. A Spartan warrior
His life would give up rather than his sword.

Re-enter ZELOTES with MYRA and guard.

ZELO. This is the prisoner.

LEAN. What brings thee here?

MYRA. O noble Spartan, hither have I come
To join thy service.

LEAN. Why, how can this be?
Thou art of Athens, if I judge aright?

MYRA. I was of Athens, but the cruel wrongs
Which I have suffered from Athenian hands,
Hath turned my love for Athens into hate:

And I forswear her with a bitter heart,
That grows revengeful when I pause to think.

LEAN. What wrongs are these of which thou dost complain?

MYRA. They for thine ear alone must be reserved.

LEAN. (*To SOLDIERS.*) Go, leave us to ourselves.

Exeunt HARMONIS, GUARD and SOLDIERS.

ZELO. (*Aside to LEANDER.*) Art thou discreet?

What if this youth, when ye are left alone,
Should use the dagger on thee?

LEAN. Fear thee not;
If with that stripling there, I could not cope,
I would deserve to die. Leave us alone.

Exit ZELOTES.

First, tell me what thy name is.

MYRA. Calydon,
I am of gentle birth, but being poor,
Was forced to enter service as a page.

LEAN. And what is it that turns thee from thy state
To serve her enemies?

MYRA. It is, alas!
The greatest injury I could sustain—
I had a sister, beautiful and pure,
A perfect type of charming maidenhood,
As innocent and tender as a babe,
Whom I did love with all the gentle force
That nature fosters in the ties of blood—
With all the sweet affection, holy, chaste,
That moves the mind to watchfulness and care,
And makes two spirits, sympathetic, true,
Unite in bonds that find their life and strength,
In links of common griefs and kindred joys;
The tale is painful and with sadness fraught—
There was in the Athenian ranks a chief,
A general of note, who paid his court
Unto my sister; she, with modesty,
Declined his suit because she loved him not;

Then this vile monster in a mortal guise,
When night had fallen, stole to her abode,
And in mine absence, basely ravished her;
Next day, when I returned unto the house,
She to'd me what had happened in the night,
And swearing that her life should not survive
The death of virtue—woman's choicest gift—
She plunged her dagger in her heaving breast,
And with a glance of agonizing pain,
She hid her shame in death's black-robed arms.
O judge of all the misery and grief,
The bitter woe that swept upon my heart
And fired all my soul with potent rage.
I told my wrongs to the Eponymos,
And asked him for redress, but 'twas in vain:
He would not pay attention to my plea;
Then in a very frenzy of despair,
I swore to be revenged, and so I was:
I am no soldier, nor a fighter, else,
Her ravisher, accursed be his soul!
I would have met in combat; as it was,
I stabbed him when he thought no evil nigh,
And left him dying in a public place;
Straightway I fled from Athens for my life,
That by the action was in danger placed;
And now I do forswear my native state,
By which I have so cruelly been used.
I am determined, heart and soul to join
My fortune with the chance that Sparta gives.
Although I am not trained in feats of war,
Yet, as a page, I swear I'll serve thee well,
If thou wilt but my services accept.

LEON. Perchance thou canst some information give
That will of greatest value prove to be.
What are the plans, resources and the strength
Of the Athenian garrison, canst tell?

MYRA. Hold! I am not a traitor, false and vile,
Come hither to betray my native state;

Dost thou imagine I am such a wretch?
Then art thou wrong; I come in faith to give
My service honorable to thy cause,
And naught but honest service will I do;
For that which hath been trusted unto me
In faith, as member of a certain state,
I hold as sacred as our holy gods.

LEAN. And so thou dost refuse to tell me that
Which I have asked thee?

MYRA. By my faith, I do!

LEAN. Consider well; in thus opposing me,
You may arouse an enemy who might
With but a word commit thee unto death.

MYRA. You have my answer; I will say no more,
Save that I'd rather die than prove so false
As to betray the land that gave me birth.

LEAN. Now, by the gods! thou art a noble youth;
I had not thought to find so true a heart
Within thy breast; thou art a worthy lad,
For he who bravely stands, preferring death,
When turning traitor will preserve his life,
Is worthy of the trust of any man.
Come hither, lad, and let me grasp thy hand;
Indeed, I will engage thy services,
And glad I'll be in finding one so true.
And now, I pray thee, tell me who it was
Who came this morning to the camp with thee.

MYRA. He is a slave who was bequeathed to me—
All of my father's fortune that remained
When death o'ertook him; hence, this servant is
My sole possession, and a worthy one,
For he hath served me well and faithfully,
And when from Athens I was forced to fly,
Although he might well have deserted me,
And in the city stayed, secure and free,
Yet did he say he'd never leave my side,
But follow where I led and share the ills
That fell unto my lot; and he it was

Who followed me into the camp this morn.
 If thou wilt but release him, you will find
 How useful he will prove himself to be.

LEAN. Then, it is now a compact, just and fair,
 My page thou shalt be, and if all proves well,
 Thy merit shall not distance thy reward.
 As to thy servant, he shall serve me too;
 I'll have him trained to be an armourer,
 Of which our army stands in sorest need;
 Harmonis can instruct him in the art,
 For he himself once served as armourer;
 But he has learned to bear and wield as well
 As he once made these implements of war.
 What is thy servant's name?

MYRA. Anacreon.

LEAN. He shall be set at liberty at once.
 Ho! guard, come hither!

Enter ARTEMAS.

Tell Harmonis, I
 Do here await him: bid him come at once.

Exit ARTEMAS.

Thou art a handsome lad, but that fair cheek,
 That in thy vain and pleasure-loving state,
 Was carefully protected from the storm,
 And from the burning glances of the sun,
 Will change its color to a darker hue
 In this rude camp, where naught but manly strength
 Is looked upon as worthy of regard.

MYRA. Although I cannot boast of manly strength,
 I have a true heart I will give to thee.

LEAN. And which I do accept.

MYRA. (*Aside.*) If he but knew
 It is a woman's heart, what would he say?
 Alack! I would be overcome with shame.

Enter HARMONIS.

HARMO. In answer to thy summons I have come.

LEAN. I have a task for thee—the prisoner
 Who with this youth was captured and confined,

Take thou beneath thy care, and teach him well
The art and practice of an armourer,
That to the army he may be of use.

HARMO. It shall be done, and that most faithfully.

MYRA. (*Aside.*) I fear she'll break more armour than
she'll mend. *Exit* HARMONIS.

LEAN. Now, Calydon, I'll woo the goddess, sleep,
And leave thee at my door to guard my rest,
For slumber hath not visited mine eyes
These many hours, for through all the night
I have been up in council with the king.
Grant thou no one admission to my tent,
Unless he be a messenger express,
Sent by King Ægis.

MYRA. Thou shalt be obeyed,
And no one shall disturb thee from thy sleep,
Till gentle nature prompts thee to awake.

Exit LEANDER *in tent.*

MYRA. How good and noble this Leander is:
How stately is his mien: what lofty thoughts
Start from the impulse of his generous heart.
Though not in title, yet he is in mind
A king of mortals, and that noble brow
Was made to wear a crown, not formed of gold,
But one of bright immortal glory wrought:
Gold is too base a burden for that head.
How my poor heart did palpitate and throb—
With what emotion though, I cannot tell—
When his dark eyes, so burning and intense,
Seemed gazing deep into my very soul.
Oh, in a strange game I am now engaged,
Of which the end is doubtful and obscure.
I wonder where Orestes is: alas!
That is the thought that weighs upon my soul.
But yonder comes a messenger; it seems
His errand leads him hither.

Enter AMPHION.

AMPHI.

Tell me, lad,

Is not the general, Leander, here?

MYRA. He is; hast thou brought messages for him?

AMPHI. I have.

MYRA. I will deliver them for thee.

AMPHI. Nay, I must see the general, myself.

MYRA. Thou canst not see him now, for he doth sleep;
And would not be disturbed.

AMPHI. I cannot wait,
For I have other duties to perform.

MYRA. And are thy messages important ones?

AMPHI. They are important, and most urgent too.

MYRA. And hast thou been sent hither by the king?

AMPHI. Who art thou, that you should thus question me?
'Tis my affair from whence I come, and now
I bid thee stand aside and let me pass:
I'll have no more delay.

MYRA. Thou canst not pass
Till thou hast told if thou art from the king.

AMPHI. Thou prating fool! I bid thee stand aside
And let me pass, else I will force my way!

MYRA. Thou art a coward to insult me thus!

AMPHI. (*Drawing his sword.*) A coward? by the gods!
I'll prove to thee

If I be cowardly! come, draw thy sword,
Or I will run thee through as thou dost stand!

MYRA. (*Aside.*) Alas! I did forget I am a man,
And not a woman in my present garb.

AMPHI. Come, draw thy sword, I say, and stand on
guard!

MYRA. I humbly pray thou wilt not take offence
At my rash words: I did forget myself.

AMPHI. Thou shalt not thus escape the punishment
Due to thine insolence. If thou wilt not
Draw forth thy sword and stand on thy defence,
I'll thrash thee with the broadside of my blade!

MYRA. But I know naught of fencing, I do swear,
And could not stand against thee.

AMPHI. (*Striking her with his sword.*) Then, take that!

MYRA. (*Drawing her sword.*) By Ares' shield, ere I to
this submit,
I'll fight thee! (*Aside.*) Oh, I tremble for my life. (*They
fight, and MYRA, who handles her sword awkwardly, is
beaten back.*)

Oh, help! Leander! save me from this man
Who, like a fiend, is thirsting for my blood!

Enter LEANDER, from tent.

LEAN. Castor and Pollux! why am I disturbed
In this rude manner? Ha! what's this, a brawl?
Hold! I command, and tell me what this means.

AMPHI. That trembling coward, pale and cringing there,
Stood and denied me access unto thee,
Till I should answer to the questions he
Put with assurant and offensive air.

LEAN. Therein he but obeyed my own commands;
And was it then for this that you did fight?

AMPHI. Nay, 'twas because, with sharp and scornful
tongue,
He flung an insult in my very teeth.

MYRA. And 'twas because with force that he did strive
To gain a rude admittance to thy tent.

LEAN. Whom art thou from?

AMPHI. The king.

LEAN. What hast thou
brought?

AMPHI. These messages, which he bade me to place
In thy hands only.

LEAN. (*Taking messages.*) If it were not so,
And if these messages which I do hold,
Were not important ones, then shouldst thou feel
The punishment thy rudeness well deserves;
But lest you should perchance yet come to grief,
Learn, in the future, to conduct thyself
With gentleness while thou art in the camp,
And all thy valor for the field reserve,
Where 'tis most needed; now thou mayest go.

Exit AMPHION.

And so, thou pretty weakling, is it thus
You guard my slumbers? Truly thou art brave,
To tremble like a woman ere she faints,
And shriek for aid, when thou art forced to draw
And wield thy sword for him whom thou dost serve.
Thou art a trusty page, I must confess;
Indeed, thy bravery amazes me.

MYRA. Alas! I ne'er was taught the art of fence,
For I have always been a lady's page,
And was not thrown among ill-tempered men,
Who, at a word, are ready with the sword,
To cut and slash each other as though mad.

LEAN. So from the blissful ream of dreamy sleep,
You roused me with this most unseemly noise.

MYRA. (*Weeping.*) Alas! I could not help it, I do swear,
For I was fearful for my life.

LEAN. Poor lad!
Weep not thy weak heart all away in tears;
I will forgive thee, since you take it so.
When nature made thee, she mistook her task;
You should have been a woman, not a man.

MYRA. I can believe you, would that I were not;
Far rather would I sing than fight for thee,
For thus I charmed the ladies of our state,
Who vowed they'd rather hear my voice in song,
Than all the passioned sighs that lovers breathe;
And yet, if thou shouldst be in danger placed,
Wherein thy life depended on my sword,
I swear to thee, I'd give my life for thine.

LEAN. Thou art a most strange boy.

MYRA. I am indeed.

LEAN. And yet, I like thee well—extremely well;
I have naught, Calydon, upon this earth,
That I hold dear, for all my kin are dead;
My mother, father, sisters, brothers, all,
But thou shalt be a brother unto me,
And if thou provest ever staunch and true,
I will appoint thee heir to my estates.

MYRA. My lord, I will not serve thee for the gain,
But for the honor, and for that alone.
My life is thine. (*Aside.*) Alack! my heart is too.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Secluded part of the Spartan Camp.*

Enter ZELOTES and HARMONIS.

ZELO. Here is a place, retired and obscure,
Where we are not apt to discovered be.

HARMO. Then draw thy sword at once, and guard
thyself!

ZELO. First, 'tis agreed that if the one who falls,
Should e'er recover from the wound received,
He never will disclose the name of him
With whom he fought, lest punishment should fall
With heavy hand upon the victor's head,
For thus engaging in an act prescribed.

HARMO. I am in honor bound, and pledge my word,
To the agreement; 'twill be fair for both.

ZELO. Then, look unto thyself, for I shall fight
With all the skill that practice hath acquired,
And all the strength that in my body dwells.

HARMO. Waste not thy strength in boasting; come and fight. (*They fight, and the sword of HARMONIS is broken; ZELOTES is about to stab him. Enter EUNICE who turns the blow aside with her dagger.*)

EUNICE I pray you, cease this cruel, murderous strife! What would ye do, my lords? What demon curst Infests your minds with jealousy and rage, That ye should thus be at each other's throats?

HARMO. Stand back, and let him strike the deadly blow That fortune hath at his disposal placed!

EUNICE. And thus deprive the army of a man Of whose good service Sparta is in need? As she needs that of every valiant man; Nay, nay, my lords, I pray you will desist. Invest your hearts with feelings just and kind, And kill your anger with the sentiment Of noble friendship, true and generous, That strives and wishes for a mutual good.

HARMO. Far rather would I die by mine own hand, Than owe my life to him.

EUNICE. You do forget:
Thy life is not thine own to lightly make
A disposition of: it is thy king's;
And therefore, in the king's name I command
That ye no longer in this strife engage.

ZELO. (*Sheathing his sword.*) Indeed, most wisely do you speak, my lad:
I had not thought of it in such a light,
But since my heated passion now is cooled,
And since you speak, it strikes me with great force;
And therefore will I heed your sage command.
Harmonis, this good youth you have to thank
For parrying the blow aimed at your life.

HARMO. Still I in readiness await the blow,
If 'tis thy will to deal it once again.

ZELO. Nay, we will heed the promptings of this youth,
And so, farewell. (*Aside.*) Oh, curse that meddling fool!
Had he not interfered with my designs,

Harmonis, whom I hate, would now be dead.

Exit ZELOTES.

HARMO. Good youth, thou hast in truth my life preserved
From that proud Spartan's sword, though truth to tell,
I rather would have had it otherwise,
Than be indebted unto him for aught;
But how was it that you discovered us?

EUNICE. It was by chance: while passing near this spot,
I heard the clash of swords, and much surprised,
I hastened here to see what it could mean.

HARMO. And so, arrived in time to save my life.
Here is my hand, take it, Anacreon,
And with it, friendship's true and earnest pledge.

Exeunt.

SCENE II. *Interior of LEANDER'S tent.*

LEANDER. ZELOTES and HARMONIS discovered conferring.

LEAN. Is now the army all in readiness
To strike the blow that must decide this war?

ZELO. It is, my lord, and waits impatiently
The time appointed for the fierce assault,
When all our warriors, with hearts of iron,
Will leap like thunder-bolts from Zeus sent,
To crush and conquer every enemy.

LEAN. 'Tis well, and with such soldiers, we will win.
Have the instructions, which I gave to thee,
Been carried out, Harmonis?

HARMO. Yes, my lord,
In every detail have they been observed,
And all that now remains, is in thy hands—
Thy leadership, on which we all depend,
And which has never yet been known to err.

LEAN. Nor shall it now, if but the gods will look
With favor on the effort I shall make.
We will not fail, far rather than defeat,
We'll yield to death; have I your hearts in this?

ZELO. You have, my lord.

HARMO. Ay, victory or death!

LEAN. Then keep the army in its present form,
And time and fortune shall fulfil the rest.
And now, farewell, your duty's smallest part
I trust you to discharge.

ZELO. and HARMO. Farewell, my lord.

Exeunt ZELOTES and HARMONIS.

LEAN. How dark the veil that covers fortune's face,
To hide it from our view; oh, that I might
Draw it aside and with inquiring mind,
Gaze deep into her strange and mystic eyes,
To read therein the stern decrees of fate,
And thus my troubled spirit set at rest;
But say, if I perchance, by some black art,
Should enter that obscure, mysterious realm,
Where reigns the future, far from mortal eyes,
And learn the events fortune doth conceal—
That world of action that in silence lies,
Inevitable, in the path of time,
Whose sure approach shall consummation bring
Of all those unknown things that are to be—
That unborn world—that stage, whose curtains part
Upon the drama tragical of life—
If I with eager eyes should view this play,
Would my impatient sp'rit be at rest?
Or would I fear to meet the destinies
That fate holds ready to administer
With cold relentless hand and mocking eye?
Perchance it would upon my senses sweep
With all the terror that attends a dream
Of some dread horror, yet with all the force
That marks the true existence of a fact,
Until to frenzy driven by the thoughts
That flooded madly through my heated brain,
I'd seek in self-destruction my relief—
But pause, my brain, in your chaotic whirl;
I'll cease this meditation, for it leads

Unto distraction: I will call my page,
And gain diversion through his ready wit.

Rings a bell.

Enter MYRA.

MYRA. My lord, did you not summon me?

LEAN.

I did,

Good youth, I am in melancholy mood,
And I would have thee with thy tongue beguile
My humor dull into a happy state.

MYRA. Ere I for thee can find a remedy,
I must be made acquainted with thy woes.
What is the cause of this thy sad complaint?
Is it because, with ever-longing heart,
Thou hast so long been parted from the charms,
The tender smiles and glances of thy bride?

LEAN. I have no bride, whose absence I should mourn,
Unless that bride be fortune, whom I trust
Is ever by my side to serve me well.

MYRA. Then it must be some maid, thy mistress fair,
Whose beaming eyes, soft with the light of love,
Live in the sanctuary of thy heart,
With rapture sweet; whose pure and dewy lips,
Red as the deepest blush that dyes the rose,
And breathing sighs from her white, heaving breast,
Have left their kisses burning on thy face;
Whose silken hair that on her matchless brow
Rests like a crown of gold—whose crimson cheek
Your memory haunt; and whose grace-gifted form,
Dwells in the secret chambers of thy soul
As part of thee. Do I not speak aright?

LEAN. Almost thou dost persuade me to believe
I am in love, but that is not the truth:
I love no woman.

MYRA. Art thou sure of that?

LEAN. As sure as that life leads us unto death.
And I will never love, be thou assured.

MYRA. Take care, thou art but man, and man may fall
Beneath the witchery of woman's eyes,

LEAN. Nay, nay,
Woman is powerless to touch my heart:
Woman—fair, fickle creature that she is,
With all her vanity and love of show,
Robing her form in garments soft and fine,
Adorning nature's charms with jewels rich,
As artificial as her own light heart,
And full of fancies, visionary, vain,
As night is with imaginary forms;
Her ways are soft, insinuating, kind,
But when she seems most artless, then her mind
Is subtly working with a deep design
To gratify some frivolous desire;
She's pleasure's devotee and passion's slave,
A pretty, idle toy, wherewith at times,
When duty hath received attention due,
We may beguile the moments pleasantly:
Nay, Calydon, no woman shall I love.

LEAN. But, Calydon, since I can know not love,
Nor woman who can inspiration give,
To make the heart beats quicken in my breast,
Where can I find the remedy I need?

LEAN. But thy fair sister now is dead; she is
Beyond the reach of mortal eye; therefore,
Thou seest it is vain to think of her.

LEAN. I do not understand.

MYRA. I will explain my meaning. Once I knew
A soothsayer, a wise and learned man,
Who was well versed in supernatural art;
And he did teach me how at midnight hour,

I might conjure the spirits of the dead
Like mortal beings to appear on earth,
And with an understanding tongue converse.

LEAN. Thy soothsayer was but a shallow knave,
To teach thee such impossibilities.

MYRA. Nay, nay, my lord, he was a learned man.

LEAN. Boy, there are many learned fools on earth.

MYRA. This good man was not of that character:
He was no fool, as I will prove to thee
By summoning my sister's spirit now,
With whom thou shalt converse, if 'tis thy wish.

LEAN. Then be it so, I'll humor thee in this.

MYRA. I will withdraw, for I must work the charm
In solitude; wait thou some minutes here
And thou shalt see, my sister will appear.
(*Aside.*) I'll don my maiden-robcs, and then return.

Exit MYRA.

LEAN. Does he possess this power that he boasts?
If so, I soon shall learn, for in the camp
There are no maidens, and if one appears,
Then must there be things of which I know naught;
And wherefore should there not be? for in death
There is a power all invisible
That moves the world with its cold, silent force;
But though it works unseen, it still exists
With greater sway and power than e'er dwelt
Within an armed host of mortal men,
What if within the bounds of mortal life
There is a spirit-world of mystery,
Whose magic wonders wait to be explored
By mortals who unconsciously pass by?
Oh, what a wonder-land might be revealed
To the aspiring being who would dare
Step o'er the line that bounds this strange domain,
And search the mystic kingdom through and through,
'Tis midnight now, and all is calm and still;
No sound I hear to break the heavy calm
That weighs its solemn silence on my soul;

It seems a time for spirits to appear,
For even in the shadows of the tent
I seem to see strange forms, fantastic shapes,
All swiftly ming'ing in a mass confused—
'Tis but imagination, straying wild,
Playing her tricks of weird deception.

Enter MYRA arrayed in female garments.

Ha!

What's this? what is this vision? O ye gods!

MYRA. Be not afraid, O mortal, for no ill
Dwells in the world from whence I have been called.

LEAN. I do not fear, I am confused, amazed!
And in a whirl of strange bewilderment.

MYRA. And wherefore? I am but a woman's spirit,
For a brief time to mortal state returned;
See, thou canst touch me and thy living sense
Receives the evidence that I am here.
But as the first soft rosy ray of dawn
Glow in the East, I'll vanish from thy sight
And be no more; this is not strange, I think,
At least, 'tis not to me.

LEAN. My mortal eyes
Ne'er gazed upon a form more beautiful
Than thine. Ye gods! methinks I am bewitched!

MYRA. The beauty which you gaze and dwell upon
Is mortal and unworthy of esteem.

LEAN. Who art thou? and from what ethereal world,
Where beauty dwel's to thrill the heart with love,
Till all the being, bliss enraptured, dreams
And trembles in an ecstasy of joy,
Hast thou in all thy grace and glory come?

MYRA. Whence I am come, can never be disclosed
To ears material, but you may know
I am a mortal woman's spirit, one,
Called Myra, sister unto Calydon
With whom thou didst confer on sacred things;
'Twas he who summoned me with sacred rites
To thus appear before thee.

Sweet day, wilt thou consent to always shine?

MYRA. Oh, foolish mortal, thine impulsive heart
'Thy reason sweeps before its passion's force.
Nay, nay, thou never canst be aught to me.

LEAN. Oh, say not so; I'll give up all on earth,
Ay, even life itself, to be near thee.

MYRA. Thou art profane. O mortal, calm thyself;
Look not on me with such impassioned gaze;
I am beyond thy mortal fancy far;
'Tis sacriligious to regard me thus.

LEAN. Although the gods condemned me for my love,
Yet would I hurl defiance at them all,
And still give ear unto my throbbing heart,
That clamors for the utterance of its thoughts;
Still would I love thee, though the thunder-bolt
Of mighty Ares killed me on the spot.

MYRA. Oh, rude profanity! I'll hear no more!

Exit MYRA.

LEAN. (*Following her to the door.*) Leave me not thus,
stay, gentle spirit, stay!
Be not so cruel, stay! alas! 'tis gone!
In what a state confused my mind is placed!
My stricken heart tumultuously doth beat
As if with dull despair, and all my brain
Doth seem bewildered; can this maiden be
Of supernatural form? 'tis strange indeed;
I would that she were mortal, for my heart
Might then find for its love a recompense—
What's this? a ribbon? by the gods! it is;
Do spirits leave such evidence behind?
By Aphrodite's girdle, I think not!
This seems most mortal and material;
Pollux! perchance this spirit, self-avowed,
Is after all, a maid of flesh and blood,
Yet so ethereal and beautiful
That she doth seem like some divine perfection;
This Calydon perchance hath played some trick
Whose very boldness was its own success,

And now the knave is laughing at the cheat:
 To-morrow I will search this matter through;
 If my suspicions but well-founded prove,
 This lovely maiden yet shall be mine own;
 Gods grant 'tis not too joyous to be true.
 I'll wear this ribbon near unto my heart,
 Until I find my love. Now I'll to rest
 If but my throbbing heart will grant me leave,
 For on the morrow I have much to do.

Lies down on a couch and sleeps.

Re-enter MYRA in page's costume.

MYRA. Now doth he sleep; my bold and artful trick
 Hath worked with full success upon his heart;
 He hath avowed he loves me, though he thinks
 I am some spirit from a ghostly world;
 How much more will he love me when he finds
 I am a mortal being like himself.
 Alas! if I could only be assured
 No evil to Orestes had occurred,
 I might be happy. O ye gracious gods,
 O all ye ministers to mortal woes,
 I pray ye with protection kindly look
 Upon my brother; guide him, I beseech,
 Through all the dangers that beset his path,
 And bring him safely to my arms again.

Lies down on a couch beside LEANDER.

O gentle slumber, visit thou mine eyes. (Sleeps.)

Enter ORESTES with a dagger in his hand.

ORES. Ye gods, oh, aid me; let your power great
 Invest my arm, that when I strike this blow,
 That shall be made for Athens' liberty,
 It may not fail in its commissioned work.

Goes up to LEANDER'S couch and stands over him with the dagger raised.

How calmly and how peacefully he sleeps,
 But even calmer will he slumber soon;
 My soul relents and almost shrinks from this
 Fierce, bloody deed of death; but I am weak:

Brace up, my heart, and with a movement stern
 Beat this brave Spartan's death-knell; let my spirit
 Be as though formed of iron. Now O gods,
 My very life shall in this blow be thrown. (*He raises the
 dagger to strike; MYRA awakes, sees him and springing
 up, seizes his arm and struggles with him.*)

MYRA. Help! help! Zeiotes! help! Harmonis! help!

LEANDER awakes and springs from his couch.

LEAN. Immortal gods! what doth this tumult mean?

Grasps his sword and rushes on ORESTES.

Accurst assassin! throw thy dagger down!

Enter ZELOTES, HARMONIS, ARTEMAS and guards.

ORESTES *frees himself from MYRA and turns to meet
 LEANDER.*

ORES. Not till its blade is buried in thy breast. (*He
 strikes at LEANDER, but is caught and pinioned from behind
 by ZELOTES and HARMONIS, assisted by guards.*)

MYRA. (*Aside*) Oh, how familiar sounds that voice
 to me.

LEAN. Bind him securely, guards, and watch him well.
 Who is this murderous minion? Hold a torch,
 That I may gaze upon his treacherous face.

ARTEMAS holds a torch before ORESTES' face.

MYRA. (*Aside.*) Merciful gods! it is Orestes! Oh!
 What evil chance hath lured him to this camp?
 If he should happen to discover me,
 'Twere ruin to us both.

LEAN. Do any here
 Know who this bold assassin is? or how
 He hath come hither?

GUARDS. No, we cannot tell.

LEAN. (*To ORESTES.*) Then unto thee the question
 will I put,
 And ere thou answer'st, do thou think of this—
 Thy life is in our hands, so speak the truth;
 Who art thou? and by whom hast thou been sent
 To do thy murderous work? and by what means
 Didst thou an entrance gain into our camp?

ORES. Had I a thousand lives, and every one
Was in thy power to destroy or give,
No threat of thine could force me to disclose
Aught that 'twas my intention to withhold;
Who sent me hither, thou shalt never know,
Though you should tear me slowly limb from limb;
But I am proud to own I am of Athens;
So much thou shalt know, and if thou wilt search,
You'll find upon the out-posts lying dead,
A sentinel: now canst thou not divine
By what means I gained entrance to your camp?

LEAN. Yes, and upon the morrow thou shalt die.

MYRA. (*Aside.*) That sentence like a dagger cuts my heart!

ORES. With only one regret will I expire,
Which is that I have failed to do my work.

MYRA. (*Aside.*) This is the dread commission he received—

'The cruel murder of Leander: ah!
It was a sad mistake; alas! alas!
No evil deed can bring a good result.

LEAN. Go, take that messenger of death away,
And guard him well, look to it, guard him well,
For on the morrow he shall pay his life
As the just penalty for his fell plot.

Exeunt ZELOTES. HARMONIS, ARTEMAS and guards with
ORESTES.

And, Calydon, to thee I owe my life,
Sincerely do I thank thee for thine act.
Oh, treacherous the time of war has grown,
When in his tent a soldier cannot sleep
Without the fear of an assassin's knife.
But yet another blow and this long war
Will be forever buried in the past.

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Spartan Camp. LEANDER'S tent.*

LEANDER, ZELOTES and HARMONIS discovered in the foreground

LEAN. There is a rumor current that proclaims
This bloody war is ended, for it says
Theramanes of Athens hath come forth,
And in the name of all his countrymen,
He is commissioned with our king to treat
For peace and ending of hostilities;
And if the rest be true that rumor states,
A certain stipulation hath been made,
Which is, that conquered Athens must tear down
One mile in length of each of her long walls;
This is to be a surety of faith;
She is to still retain her liberty;
So if this treaty she'll consent to sign,
She will have made her peace with all her foes.

HARMO. But will she to this treaty give consent?
I doubt it much indeed: her spirit proud
Will not this great humiliation brook.

ZELO. She is in no condition to resist:
Her citizens are famishing for bread,
She cannot choose but bow her haughty head.

HARMO. If this be true, the night assault we planned
Is rendered useless, and need not be made.

LEAN. Yet this is but a rumor, and we know
That bare-faced rumor oft outrages truth;
So hold the army still in readiness,
And if of this no further news we hear,
Or if, it being true, should Athens still
Hold out in her resistance obstinate,

Why then to morrow night, with crushing blows,
 We'll bring this war unto a speedy close.
 And now, to give attention unto things
 That should receive immediate regard:
 Bring forth the man—that rash Athenian—who
 Sought to assassinate me yester-night.

ZELO. He shall be brought at once, my lord.

Exit ZELOTES.

LEAN.

'Tis well.

Now by the gods! if justice doth exist,
 It shall be meted out to this bold wretch:
 The blade he sought to bury in my breast,
 Shall as a witness at his own life aim,
 For he shall die before the sun is down.

Enter ZELOTES, followed by MYRA dressed in ORESTES' costume and conducted by ARTEMAS.

ZELO. Here is the prisoner.

LEAN.

Come, bring him hither.

Thou art the man who sought to take my life?

MYRA. Not I, my lord, I never sought thy life.

LEAN. What dost thou say? Castor! 'tis Calydon!
 Why, what has happened? why this strange disguise?
 Explain, what means this transformation, pray?

MYRA. Upon my knee your pardon do I crave
 For having practiced such deceit on thee.

LEAN. Why art thou brought to me instead of him
 For whom I sent? come, answer, I command.

MYRA. During the night I took his place, as you
 Had sentenced him to death. for by my life,
 He was the truest friend I ever had.

LEAN. Now by great Zeus! traitor that thou art,
 How has this deed of treachery been done?
 Where is the soldier who was placed on guard
 To watch the prisoner?

ARTE.

My lord, 'twas I.

LEAN. Thou careless fool! thus is it you perform
 Your duty! speak and tell naught but the truth—
 What dost thou know of this deceptive trick?

ARTE. My lord, I swear to thee I guarded well
 Through all the weary night the prisoner's tent;
 All that I know of this affair I'll state—
 This morn' an hour ere the break of day,
 Came Calydon to me and in thy name,
 An interview demanded with my charge,
 Whereon, I did admit him to the tent;
 Soon after, as I thought, he reappeared;
 At least, there in the dim light of the dawn,
 I recognized the costume he had worn
 When first the tent he entered: thought of wrong
 Ne'er for an instant flashed across my brain;
 So he whom I mistook for Calydon
 Passed onward till in darkness he was lost;
 And when thou for the prisoner didst send,
 I took this youth and hither led the way;
 Still yet no thought of ill had crossed my mind
 Till thou didst recognize in him I brought,
 Young Calydon.

MYRA. Yes, all is true, my lord,
 To save this poor Athenian's life condemned,
 I changed my garb for his, and took his place,
 Thus aiding his escape.

LEAN. Then shalt thou die;
 For since you took his place as prisoner,
 You shall his condemnation also take;
 'Twill for thy treachery be just reward.
 (To ARTEMAS) Take him away, let him for death prepare,
 For he shall die at sunset.

MYRA. Dost forget
 'Twas I who saved thy life but yester night?

LEAN. True, thou didst save my life, but that does not
 Excuse thy treachery, or change thy guilt.

MYRA. If thou didst know all, then thou wouldst forgive;
 O! grant me but an interview with thee,
 Where none may hear us; I will tell thee all.

LEAN. What! send my guard away and leave thee free
 To use thy dagger on me? Though so young

I see thou art as cunning as a fiend;
And thou in whom I had reposed such trust,
Thou whom I had already learned to love.

MYRA. Thou dost me great injustice, I do swear;
Would I have saved thy life if such intents
Held an abiding place within my heart?

LEAN. We cannot always fathom traitors' acts,
For deeds that seem commendable and fair,
Are often but the shields of blackest sin;
But think not that I fear thee, 'tis not so,
I'll grant the interview for which you ask—
Go, leave us, all, I'll hear this youth's defence.

Exeunt ZELOTES, HARMONIS and ARTEMAS.

MYRA. Thou hast indeed but little cause to fear.

LEAN. We are alone.

MYRA. (*Aside.*) Alas! and since 'tis so,
I fear to tell the truth: my poor heart shrinks
From this confession I am bound to make.

LEAN. What art thou saying?

MYRA. O relentless fate!
That forces this confession fraught with shame.
Ah, good Leander, I am much distraught;
Look on me with compassion: pity me.

LEAN. What canst thou mean?

MYRA. I am not what I seem.

LEAN. Thou art indeed a mystery to me.

MYRA. I am a woman.

LEAN. Thou a woman? thou?

MYRA. Alas! 'tis true, and being thus confessed,
Helpless before thee, wilt thou not relent,
And pardon me?

LEAN. Ye gods majestic!
I am amazed! how has this come to pass?
Why hast thou come disguised into our camp?
Art thou a cursed spy? a traitress here?
A woman who for intrigues of the state
Hath all the instincts of her sex forgot,
Outraging maiden modesty and truth,

To hither come and play her treachery?
A tool use I for thy nation's basest deeds?
But who, when death-confronted, shrinks with fear,
And pleads for mercy?

MYRA. 'Tis not so, I swear.

LEAN. Now do I see the fullness of thy guilt,
And all thine actions strange which I had marked,
Now with their cunning motives stand revealed.

MYRA. I vow to thee, I'm guilty of no wrong
Save this disguise.

LEAN. Oh, I have fathomed thee
Far better than thou thinkest, and thy trick
Is now explained; 'twas thou who yester-night
Sought as a spirit to impose thyself
Upon a too indulgent auditor:
But I was not deceived, for look you here—
When thou didst go, thou didst behind thee leave
This ribbon that betrayed thee unto me:
Wilt thou deny this, woman?

MYRA. 'Twas but an innocent and girlish prank,
As void of evil as my bleeding heart;
'Twas thy request to be amused that first
Suggested it to me, and nothing more.

LEAN. Methinks thy words are false as Pluto's smile;
Oh, I had loved thee, wert thou not so base!

MYRA. Oh, all ye gods, bear witness to my grief!
I am mi-judged and wronged.

LEAN. I would 'twere so,
For if I thought that, then would I rejoice
In finding thee still pure and innocent;
But to believe thee guiltless were to doubt
The evidence my senses have bestowed

MYRA. But all I can explain if thou'lt but deign
To hear my story with a patient ear.

LEAN. Thy falsehoods are already manifold,
Make them no greater.

MYRA. Listen, oh, I pray.
I will convince thee, though against thy will;

When thou dost learn of all the griefs and ills
That I have suffered, thou wilt pity me.
Two days ago, ah! woful was the hour!
Orestes, my brave brother and sole friend—
A warrior in the Athenian ranks—
Was on a mission dangerous despatched,
The nature of which I was unaware;
At night, when he had gone, a certain chief,
Who vainly had my hand in marriage sued,
Sent unto me a messenger who told
A dreadful story of my brother's fate,
Announcing him as wounded nigh to death;
And praying me to come ere he was dead;
I, half distracted, followed whither led,
And was conducted to the chieftain's house,
There to discover I had been decoyed
To honor's fell destruction, which to save
I slew the villain who my ruin sought;
And to escape the penalty I feared
Might overtake me if I there remained,
I fled from Athens with my maid, and then
In page's guise we sought protection here,
Telling as much truth as we safely could
Without betraying unto thee our sex:
Last night, when from the dagger's cruel point
I saved thy life, I found I had but placed
My brother's life at stake, for he it was
Who aimed the fatal weapon at thy breast:
This his commission was; but think you now
How all my soul was frenzied at the thought
Of his life forfeited; 'twas in despair,
I formed the plan by which he did escape
Could I do less than this? You do not still
Doubt what I tell thee?

LEAN Nay, thy truthful eyes
Speak with the purity of all thy soul.

MYRA. And wilt thou my deception then forgive?

LEAN. 'Tis I who for forgiveness must implore;

How I have wronged thee; how I have misjudged
Thy gentle nature and thy noble heart;
'Twas my impulsive spirit mad with rage
That so misled me.

MYRA. I have well deserved
Thy censure.

LEAN. Nay, fair lady, 'tis not so;
I beg thou wilt allow me to atone
For my ill-treatment of thee.

MYRA. So thou shalt,
By sending me in safety from your camp
To refuge find in Sparta's boundaries,
For unto Athens I cannot return.

LEAN. But wilt thou not in my protection trust?
Oh, stay thou here and I will shelter thee
From every danger and from every ill.

MYRA. Nay, that is now impossible to do;
For since thou knowest me for what I am,
I blush with shame as I behold my garb
And fain would go and hide myself from thee;
Nay, modesty demands that I return
Unto the habits that become my sex.

LEAN. You speak the truth: 'tis right you should do so;
An escort shall conduct thee to the gates
Of Sparta, in whose shelter, rest secure.

MYRA. And may the gods reward thy noble deeds;
Your kindness far exceeds what I deserve

LEAN. Nay, you are wrong: couldst thou but read my
heart,

And there behold the grief and bitter pain
That weighs upon its action at the thought
Of all the wrong I've done thee, thou wouldst know
That no atonement I could tender thee,
Would still the pangs of deep remorse I feel.
Would to the gods I might live o'er again
This day's brief hours now forever past.

MYRA. Oh, pray be not so hard upon thyself:
How couldst thou know until I told thee all?

No harm has come to me, and all is well.

LEAN. Ah, could I but believe thy heart forgave
As freely as thy tongue, then might I think
The future held much happiness for me.

MYRA. Then be that happiness entirely thine,
For I protest both heart and tongue forgive.

LEAN. Thou dost not know what happiness I mean.

MYRA. What wouldst thou say?

LEAN. That more than life itself
I love thee; and since yester-night when thou
Didst all thy beauties unto me reveal,
Thine image hath been graven on my heart
By that great sculptor, thought, whose chisel is
Sweet memory; I'd forfeit everything
To gain thy hand, save honor, which must live
To make me worthy of thy love; O speak,
And say you do not scorn me.

MYRA. Scorn for thee
Could ne'er my bosom enter.

LEAN. Lady fair,
You thrill my heart with ecstasy; perchance
My passion is not vain?

MYRA. Love never is;
It cannot be save when 'tis insincere,
For true love shows how noble is a man.

LEAN. And does mine meet with favor in your eyes?

MYRA. Why should it not, since I am but a boy?
You may adopt me, and, as you have said,
Make me thine heir.

LEAN. All I possess is thine;
But tell me, maiden, if thou lovest me.

MYRA. Since I do hate thee not, love thee I must.

LEAN. Ah, you are bound to turn my love to jest.

MYRA. Yet there is reason in what I have said.

LEAN. But reason is not love; love do I seek:
Wilt thou deny it?

MYRA. I will answer thee
When we in Sparta meet.

LEAN. That, lovely maid,
May never be; give me an answer now;
For war's a most uncertain game to play,
And I would know thy heart while life is mine:
Forebodings are upon my soul impressed
Of some dark evil that is yet to come.

MYRA. The gods forbid! Oh, dost thou think that death
Will overtake thee?

LEAN. That I cannot tell,
And if you love me not, I do not care.

MYRA. But I do love thee; all my heart is thine,
And to thy keeping do I give my life.

He takes her in his arms.

LEAN. As sacred as the temples of the gods
Shall thy sweet trust be kept; this very day
To Sparta I'll despatch a messenger,
Who with a priest shall speedily return
And make our hearts and souls a single life
Forever in communion sweet to dwell.

MYRA. May Aphrodite smile upon our love.

LEAN. (*Kissing her.*) Here on thy lips could I forever
dwell

To draw sweet nectar, fraught with mortal bliss
From their soft crimson portals.

MYRA. Foolish man,
Thus to caress a boy.

LEAN. Were boys as sweet
As thou, I would have cause to cherish them.

MYRA. But I must go and find my waiting-maid,
That we may in our proper garments robe.

LEAN. But stay, thy name thou hast not told me yet.

MYRA. My name is Myra; does it please thine ear?

LEAN. As music from some sweet enchanted lute.

Exeunt.

Enter ORESTES dressed in the page's costume previously worn by MYRA.

ORES. Since I have been ordained to do this deed,
Grim danger and gaunt death no power have

To change my purpose. Be my efforts crowned
With failure or success, yet will I seek
To do my deadly work. Whatever comes
My troubled life will soon be at an end;
These Spartans lie in wait to strike me dead,
For by my action past am I foredoomed.
Barisas now shall see I do not fear
To die for Athens' sake—but Myra! oh,
What could have brought her hither? Yester-night
She would not tell me aught, but bade me go,
Assuring me she would be safe: I fear
I did not right to leave her in this camp;
If she has suffered aught, it will be sweet
To know I have avenged her by the death
Of this bold general; so come what may,
My fixed design shall executed be.
I'll hide near by, and patiently await
A chance to send Leander to his gods,
Or down below to Hades and the fiends. *(Exit.)*

Enter LEANDER, ZELOTES and HARMONIS.

LEAN. A message from the government doth state
This war is ended: treaties have been signed
That unto all the states therein engaged
Grant peace and liberty; our object high,
Supremacy of Athens to prevent.
Is now attained, wherefore, let all rejoice.

HARMO. The gods be praised! that have directed this.

ZELO. Sparta should place her heel on Athens' neck,
Instead of granting peace and liberty.

LEAN. But I have more to tell you, which is this:
The pages who two days ago were brought
Into our camp, were women in disguise,
Who for their lives from Athens hither fled,
For in their native state they were much wronged;
The one who set our doomed prisoner free,
Did what was natural, and what we all
Would in her place have done; her brother 'twas
She aided to escape; how can we blame

Such sisterly devotion? Now these maids
Desire unto Sparta to be sent,
Where they may dwell securely; hence, I need
A trusty escort to conduct them thither.

HARMO. My services I gladly tender thee.

LEAN. Zelotes, go and have a guard prepared.

Exit ZELOTES.

HARMO. In person I the escort will conduct
If thou wilt grant permission.

LEAN. That will I;
My mind will be relieved to know their guide
Is worthy of his trust—See, here they come;
How beautiful she is; how pure and fair.

Enter MYRA and EUNICE in female costume. MYRA advances to LEANDER who takes her in his arms.

HARMO. (*To EUNICE.*) So thou wert fooling me, thou
roguish maid;

For this deceit, you must a forfeit pay.

EUNICE. What forfeit dost thou mean?

HARMO. Thy heart.

EUNICE. Alack!

If I should say I never shall behold
He who can move my heart to love, what then?

HARMO. Sometimes when beauty is most confident,
Then is she rudely taken unawares,
Ensnared and deftly captured, heart and soul;
So may it be with thee, fair one, so pray
Be not too boastful of thy powers great
To keep the maiden fortress of thy heart
Impregnable unto assailing foes,
Who aim love's lances at its snowy walls.

EUNICE. I grant thee, this philosophy of thine
Is fraught with reason, and conviction too,
When you stand forth as the philosopher.

HARMO. Come thou with me, for I have much to say.

Exeunt EUNICE and HARMONIS.

LEAN. O thou my life! my fate! my heart's delight!
Thou art a brilliant star divinely set

High in the heaven of my mortal bliss.

MYRA And thou art more to me than all the world.

LEAN. I have good news, sweet Myra, for thine ears:
Fair countenanced peace once more established is
Between conflicting states. Within two days
In Sparta I will join thee; there will we,
Beside the sacred altars of our gods,
With fitting rites our marriage celebrate,
Instead of in this rude and uncouth camp.

MYRA. Such rapture seems too perfect to exist;
The gods are kind. Now since this cruel war
Is at an end, once more in safety I
May see my brother; true, he sought thy life,
But wilt thou not forgive him for my sake?

LEAN. Yes, for it was his patriotic soul
Which must have armed him for his bloody deed.

MYRA. Now must I for my journey go prepare.
Farewell, Leander.

LEAN. Farewell, Myra, love.

Exit MYRA.

Sweet one, you nevermore shall know a care,
If life's devotion can its coming stay.

Walks toward his tent. Enter ORESTES who springs forward and stabs him.

ORES. Now is my work accomplished: witness gods!

LEANDER *falls, then totters to his feet and draws his sword.*

LEAN. Oh! damned treachery, that worketh thus!
Ho! guards! come hither! treason! treason! help!
Thou curst assassin, double is thy crime!

Strikes at ORESTES, but his sword drops from his grasp and he falls dead.

Enter ZELOTES, ARTEMAS and guards.

ZELO. Who calls for aid? The furies! this curst wretch
Hath reappeared to do his treacherous work!
Die then! and Hades' tortures be thy fate!

Stabs ORESTES.

ARTEMAS and GUARDS. (*Also stabbing him*) Thus do

we all avenge thy bloody deed!

Enter EUNICE and HARMONIS.

ORES. O gods! (*Sinks down and dies. EUNICE bends over him weeping. The Soldiers gather around the form of LEANDER.*)

HARMO. (*Standing over LEANDER's body.*) Alas! alas!
his life is o'er

Whose heart the moment past beat high with health;
Mortality, we are thy subjects all. (*Covers LEANDER's face with his robe. MYRA is heard laughing and talking in the distance.*)

MYRA. Leander! I have something to impart!
And 'tis a merry tale! One of thy guards,
Who chanced to see me, fell down at my feet,
Believing me some goddess from the skies!

Enter MYRA.

The foolish fellow was affrighted— (*She pauses in surprise.*)

Why!

Where is Leander? Eunice, what means this?
Why weepest thou? Whose form lies at thy feet,
To give thee cause for lamentations wild?
If he be hurt, tears will not heal his wound;
But who is he? (*Advances to the body.*)

Orestes! O ye gods!

EUNICE. Nothing can heal his wound, for it is death!

MYRA. (*Sinking down and sobbing.*) Oh! oh! hast thou
forever left me? ah!

How can I live without thee? thou whose life
Was linked to mine with such devoted love!
What cursed hand laid thy dear head so low?
Oh, horrible! thy bosom gaps with wounds!
But thou shalt be avenged, and quickly too. (*Starting up and turning to the guard.*)

Where is Leander? he shall know of this,
And woe to him who did this dreadful deed!
For justice shall be visited on him;
Yea, I will be revenged! Where is your chief?

HARMO. I fain would tell thee not.

MYRA.

But I will know.

HARMO. (*Motioning the guards away from LEANDER'S body.*) Then, lady, there behold him, stricken down
By yonder dead Athenian's murderous blade.

MYRA. What dost thou say? Ye gods! I shall go mad!
My love, art thou too slain? and by the hand
Of mine own brother? 'Tis a bitter hour! (*Kneels by LE-
ANDER'S form weeping, and draws the robe from his face.*)
Black, woful chapter of unending ills!
Oh, can this horror be reality,
Or do I dream? Ye miserable fates,
Why have ye let me live until to-day?

EUNICE. Oh, how my spirit echos that sad cry!

MYRA. My heart is broken! Life is worse than death
Since thou art gone. I'll not survive thee long:
Here with thy sword I give my life to thee!

Stabs herself.

Upon thy bosom shall my fleeting soul
Be borne unto the keeping of the gods.

Falls on the body and dies. EUNICE *faints in HARMONIS'*
arms.

CURTAIN.



Miscellaneous Poems.



TO A ROSE.

—x—

Sweet blushing rose, thou art the regal queen
Of Flora's bright and wildering domain;
Upon thy native throne of richest green,
Thou dost in all thy perfect beauty reign.

The gentle zephyrs round thee softly play,
And touch thy budding lips with kisses sweet,
'Till 'neath thy subtle perfume's rapturous sway,
They bear away thy scents on pinions fleet.

O'er brake and meadow, over hill and vale,
Thine odors rich, voluptuous, they waft,
'Till every breath that nature doth exhale,
Comes in a sweet intoxicating draught.

The buzzing bees sing love-songs unto thee,
As on thy crimson heart they softly rest,
And while they sing, behold! with busy glee,
They steal the golden honey from thy breast.

How glorious thou art at break of day,
When wakened from thy slumbers, soft and sweet,
By some melodious robin's tuneful lay,
Who thus the advent of the morn doth greet.

Then like a cluster rich of jewels bright,
The dew-drops dazzling crown thy crimson head,
Reflecting all the hues of dawning light,
That from Aurora's pearly wings are shed.

Methinks thy tinted petals may conceal
Some fairy worker of thy wonders sweet,
Who from thy bosom beautiful will steal.
When she hath made thy raptures all complete.

And yet I know a rose as fair as thou,
Although whose blush is not as deep as thine;
A rose with crimson lips, and pure white brow,
A rose of womanhood with eyes divine.

And for her sake I'll pluck thee, blushing rose,
Despite the thorns that guard thy fair domain;
In her soft golden locks thou shalt repose;
The crown that graces beauty's gentle reign.

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

—x—

In yonder wood there is a dell,
Where flowers in profusion sweet,
The senses with rare perfumes greet,
And there methinks the fairies dwell,
And sprites in nightly revel meet.

Her beauty nature there unveils,
For by the wild and crimson rose,
The violet with fragrance grows,
And there the sweet arbutus trails,
And hark! a tinkling streamlet flows.

There on the mossy bank behold!
The daisies have but lately grown,
And lo! upon a verdant throne,
The buttercup, arrayed in gold,
Makes to the world its beauties known.

In yonder dark yet placid pool,
The water-lily slakes its thirst,
While buds in wondrous beauty burst,
Kissed by the breezes, balmy, cool,
And by the hand of nature nursed.

There on a flowered mound, perchance—
When night her dusky kingdom sways,
And mortals dwell in dreamland's maze—
The sprites and fairies madly dance,
To strains the wind æolian plays.

Once as the first warm blush of Spring,
O'erspread majestic nature's face,
The scars of Winter to displace;
When winds like censers sweet did swing
Rich odors through the realm of space;

I wandered through this flowery dell,
Beside a maid of grace untold:
Of beauty wondrous to behold;
On whose brown locks the sunlight fell,
And wove a maze of burnished gold.

She had such eyes! deep orbs of blue;
And from her cheeks, the rosy flush
Oft mantled brow with beauty's blush;
And oh, her lips of crimson hue,
Would foil the art of painter's brush!

There as she plucked from banks of green,
The subjects sweet of nature's reign,
Wound with the bright dew's crystal chain,
Methought she was some fairy queen,
And this her magical domain.

And ah, I had been well content,
To dwell on this delightful theme,
And pause forever in my dream,
Beneath the charm her presence lent,
For she so pure and fair did seem.

And even now, although in thought,
I roam again that woodland green,
Beside my charming fairy-queen,
Till by imagination wrought,
My mind surveys some wondrous scene,

Wherein my queen her scepter sways,
Graced with a crown of silver light,
Spun from the moon-beams, crystal, white.
Tinged with the sun's soft, crimson rays,
And gemmed with stars, resplendent, bright.

TRAILING ARBUTUS.

—x—

Sweet trailing Arbutus, fair flower of Spring:
Thou comest as a maiden
With charms richly laden:
And thy shades nature-born,
Like the pearl-tints of morn,
Doth thy beauty adorn,
Till birds of thy grace in rapt choruses sing.

Thy petals their delicate beauty display,
And thy chalice pale-blue,
Holds the silvery dew,
That is sparkling and bright,
With a mystical light,
As though wept in the night
By angels who sighed for the advent of day.

Thou dost on the bosom of earth low recline;
The wind softly breathing,
Thy perfume is wreathing,
With the sun's golden sheen,
Into glories unseen,
For some fairyland queen,
To wear as a crown on her forehead divine.

LILIAN.

—x—

Fair Lilian! so charming and so gay,
With heaven beaming in thy dark blue eyes,
Thy smile is like the blushing dawn of day,
From which all gloom and shadow swiftly flies.

Blithe Lilian! thy ways are witching, kind;
Thou'rt like a sunbeam poised in mad delight
Upon the restless pinions of the wind,
Forever sparkling in a dazzling flight.

Shy Lilian! why grown so strange of late,
With greeting now so formal and so cold?
What can this mean, sweet mistress of my fate?
Hast thou so soon forgot the days of old?

Lost Lilian! fair traitress that thou art!
With all thy beauty, pure and stainless yet,
Thou hast a false, deceitful, shallow heart,
Alas! I rue the day we ever met.

Yet, when the world shall turn from thee in scorn,
And deep remorse thy tortured breast shall fill;
When thy sad heart with vain regret is torn,
Then will I love thee truly, fondly still.

THE LOVER'S CALL.

—x—

O lady, arise from thy slumbers!
The countless stars softly are gleaming;
The nightingale's musical numbers
Break through nature's mystical dreaming.
O'er yon mountain's summit, snow-crested,
The moon, battling shadowy legions,
Appears with her glory invested,
As queen of the night's dusky regions.

O lady, I long to behold thee!
To dwell in thine eyes' dusky splendor;
I long in mine arms to enfold thee,
And hear thy words, passionate, tender;
Oh, then I implore thee, awaken!
Pray let not thy lover in sorrow,
Sing on, all alone and forsaken,
Alas! 'twill be years till to-morrow.

THE BRIGHTEST ORBS.

—x—

I looked upon the sun that, all ablaze,
Down the horizon sank to veil its light;
And as it melted there before my gaze,
I wondered what could be more pure and bright.

While yet I pondered on this witching theme,
The crystal moon climbed up her silver stair;
And, as I marked the softness of each beam,
I thought: Not brighter, but more pure and fair.

The stars in space, their beauties half-concealed,
And thus bespoke of glories all untold.
I thought the moon could softer beauty yield;
The sun could give a richer tint of gold.

Yet, there is something purer, brighter, still,
Than all the spheres that circle through the skies;
That makes my heart vibrate and sweetly thrill—
It is a pair of soft, entrancing eyes.

Therein a soul bespeaks its holy truth;
Therein a heart reflects its faith and love;
Therein beams all the innocence of youth:
These dim the lustre of the orbs above.

SLEEP.

—x—

Sweet mistress, Sleep, thou spirit of the night!
Whose face with slumberous beauty softly beams:
Thou ledest swift imagination's flight
Unto the mystic realm of blissful dreams;
Thy languid eyes, where gentleness doth dwell,
Woo to destruction Nature's peevish woes;
Thy magic glance's deep and mystic spell
Through all the being thrills with sweet repose;
Thy gentle touch is rapturous and sweet,
Fraught with the wonders of a world obscure,
Whose splendent maze doth slumbering senses greet
With ideal shapes too perfect to endure:
Mortality is subject to thy reign,
And oft explores thy wildering domain.

DAWN.

—x—

About her mystic form the dusky queen,
Shade-crested night, enfolds her sable robe,
Begirt with stars whose gold and silver sheen,
Falls with a ghostly light upon the globe;
Then from her dreamy reverie she starts,
And slowly to another realm departs,
To hold in conquest dark some new domain.
Lo! in the East, Aurora, pearly-browed,
With crimson blushes coloring her face,
Back from the morn's gray portals draws the shroud,
And new-born Day peeps through the realm of space,
Until the sun, ablaze with glorious light,
Puts every lingering shadow unto flight,
And in his lustrous majesty doth reign.

TWILIGHT.

—x—

The day is dead, and night is yet unborn,
For twilight, with its evanescent shades,
Holds dim uncertain sway; in forest glades,
The sylvan singers, silent and forlorn,
Sit dull, and heavy-pinioned; winds do mourn,
And light, deceptive, glimmers, tremb'les, fades.
The realm of Flora bows to nature's reign;
Some of her subjects droop and die apart,
While others, touched as though by fairy art,
Unfold their charms to grace her fair domain;
The frogs croak forth their melancholy strain
In bass tones that o'er pond and streamlet start.
The evening star, in majesty alone,
Reigns silver-crowned on its ethereal throne.

NIGHT.

—x—

Night, sable queen of darkness, softly steals
To day's deserted throne; her dusky robe
She spreads from East to West across the globe,
And earth's fair beauty ruthlessly conceals.
The stars shine dimly in the realm of space;
The moon's bright darts of opalescent light
Are shattered 'gainst the ebon shield of night,
And nature slumbers, locked in gloom's embrace.
Anon the owl, with melancholy tones,
Sounds forth his moody cry in measured notes:
The whip-poor-will's weird, woful whimper floats
In dirges drear, the winds convert to moans.
The trees like spectral shapes point to the sky,
And rustling branches murmur, creak and sigh.

THE DESERTED CASTLE.

—x—

Upon a hill that overlooks a lake,
Whose shining surface doth its shadow take;
 An ancient castle rears its mighty towers,
 All overgrown with mossy plants and flowers:
While ivy green around its turrets cling,
In which the bird too long upon the wing
 May pause to take a momentary rest,
 Ere he resumes his flight unto his nest.
The castle wears a lone, deserted air,
As though no mortal ever ventures near;
 And though it lies in ancient ruins piled,
 Still lingers in its outline, beauty wild.
While gazing on the battlements of old;
I saw them, filled with gallant knights, and bold,
 Whose helmets shone like fire in the sun
 Like all the passions of their souls undone;
And who for chivalry and valor's sake,
Waged hottest war when honor was at stake.
 Then this wild fancy seemed to pass away,
 And in its place left ruin and decay;
The rusty hinges of the castle gate
Had long refused to bear its ponderous weight;
 And passing through the arch that still remained,
 I reached the court-yard, where confusion reigned;
There mighty trees, gigantic shadows threw,
And underbrush in tangled masses grew;
 And through this labyrinth which time there wove,
 To find an easy path I vainly strove,
But struggling on, I reached the castle door,
Whose oaken form the trace of ages bore;
 I entered there and wandered through the halls,
 Where startled echos met the strange footfalls;
And often I in terror stopped and paled,
As suddenly some form my sight assailed.
 But finding it was but some model cased
 In rusty steel some knight of old had graced;

Or yet some painting from a master's hand
That still portrayed the inspiration grand;
I onward passed with all my fears subdued,
Though still my spirit was with awe imbued.
I came upon a passage dark and dread,
Yet I resolved to follow whence it led;
And stealing softly through the dreary gloom,
I found it opened on a lofty room,
Where all the hangings were of red and white,
And faintly shone through colored panes, the light;
I paused upon the threshold in surprise,
Before the scene that greeted there my eyes.
Stretched on the floor, in armor was a knight,
Whose sword in hand told of a deadly fight;
While near at hand another form there laid,
Whose broken brand the struggle half betrayed;
But with a glow of courage I advanced,
And at the silent forms in wonder glanced,
And turning one to look upon his face,
I saw a ghastly skull was in its place;
I started back from the repulsive sight,
When something gleamed beneath the ghostly light.
There on the floor before my startled gaze,
A diamond shone with colors all ablaze;
I stooped to raise the jewel from the floor,
But as I touched it, inward 'fell a door,
And in the recess strangely thus disclosed,
A secret staircase was to view exposed;
And all was dark and silent as the dead,
As I descended it with cautious tread.
I reached the door below with sinking heart,
And drew the aged curtains there apart;
Issuing from the dark and silent gloom,
I stumbled o'er a body in a room,
From which the sound of rattling bones arose;
I speechless stood, my heart with horror froze;
For by the flowing robe the figure wore,
And from the withered locks upon the floor,

And by the dagger lying at its side,
I knew a woman prisoned here, had died.
In horror from the scene I turned and fled,
While echoed through the halls my hasty tread,
Until it seemed as though I were pursued
By ghostly skeletons with life imbued;
Not for a moment did I pause or stay,
Until from that dread castle far away.

TWILIGHT MEDITATION.

—x—

The western sky is flushed with dying day,
And soft the twilight gathers still and gray,
As meditation wanders through my brain,
Recalling moments fraught with joy or pain,
Until my soul is buried in the shade
Of scenes left in the breach that time has made;
And in that breach—the silent past—appears
—Enshrined in memory through the length of years—
A woman's form endowed with stately grace,
With beauty living in her noble face,
Whose passioned eyes once thrilled my youthful heart,
And made the blood from thence in rapture start;
But now of whom the memory lives alone,
And death will soon call even this its own.

AN OCEAN MYTH.

—x—

The sea was locked in night's embrace,
The stars had silvered heaven's dome,
The moon had ventured into space,
And glanced upon the ocean's foam.

I stood upon a stately ship,
That rode the swells with graceful ease,
And watched the crystal moon-beams tip
With mystic light the rolling seas.

And as, in contemplation there,
I gazed upon that shining flood,
A thrilling cry rang through the air,
That stopped my heart and froze my blood.

Then just before the vessel's prow,
A face rose up from out the deep;
A look of anguish marked the brow,
Like one who neared death's endless sleep.

It turned on me its passion'd eyes,
Full of entreaty, grief and pain,
Then raised an arm toward the skies
And sank into the sea again.

Was it a naiad, or woman fair,
Or yet a dream I dreamed awake,
That rose before my vision there,
To haunt me till my heart shall break?

VESPERS.

—x—

How calm, how holy doth the hour seem;
Day hath departed like a golden dream,
And grayish twilight softly hath unfurled
Her dusky banners o'er the dark'ning world;
The vesper bells with clear and silvery peal,
Like angel voices through the silence steal,
While in the old cathedral, massive, dim,
The surpliced boys chant forth the evening hymn,
Like sweet, celestial choirs that upraise
Their spirit voices with melodious praise,
And while the echoes through the arches ring,
The black-robed priest, with murmured prayer, doth
swing
The golden censer; and the organ's peal
Seems some mysterious message to reveal.

A LANDSCAPE ON THE NIAGARA.

—x—

'The mighty river, broad and winding flows
Gracefully on; the sun, declining, seeks
To garnish o'er with gold and crimson streaks
Its breast of emerald; while softly blows
The Summer wind across its broad expanse,
Till countless ripples, gaily, madly dance,
To music that the rolling water chants.

And on each side of this majestic stream,
A lofty bank doth raise its verdant heights,
Bathed in the day's soft, opalescent lights,
That now are fading like a magic dream.
At points upon some hill's broad, fruitful breast,
A little village peacefully doth rest,
In glory garbed, from the illumined West.

A SUMMER NIGHT.

—x—

'Tis eventide: forth do I roam
Beneath the stars that softly gleam;
The lights, high-swung in heaven's dome,
Shine with the glamour of a dream.
The passion-flower lifts its head,
Crowned with a diadem of dew,
Whose limpid deeps, to crystal wed,
The moon with silver doth imbue.

At yonder rugged mountain's base,
A lake in placid beauty lies,
Wherein her fair, translucent face
Luna surveys, with lustrous eyes,
And o'er its sapphire surface throws
A streak of silver, mystic, bright,
Wherewith the water, as it flows,
Enkindles opalescent light.

Here 'neath this lake, perchance there dwells
A band of nymphs and sirens fair,
Within a palace built of shells,
Of jewels, gems and crystals rare;
Where on a coral throne, the queen
Of all this watery domain,
Clad in a robe of gauzy green—
Pearl-crowned—doth hold her mystic reign.

And in this fancy could I think,
The rhythmic sound of shoreward swells,
Is but the jingle and the clink,
Of mermaids ringing silver bells;
And that the murmur of the wind,
Weird, wailing as it floats along,
Whose meaning cannot be divined,
Is but a siren's luring song.

But lo! the ebon wing of night,
With fire seems to flash and blaze;
For clustering there with changing light,
The fire-flies form a brilliant maze.
The nightingale with tuneful tongue,
Chants forth his sweet impassioned lay,
Whose cadences by breezes swung,
In dulcet measures die away.

The realm of roses, red and white,
The hyacinth and violet,
Their perfumes ravishing unite,
With heliotrope and mignonette:
While oleander on the breeze,
Comes mingled with magnolia scent,
Wherewith arbutus and heartsease,
Are richly, rapturously blent.

Bright Venus, love's immortal queen,
Imperial and glorified,
Garbed in a robe of silver sheen,
Sheds dreamy love-light far and wide:
And all the planets flash and beam,
With luminous eternal light,
While with a transitory gleam,
The meteors take their splendid flight.

O Nature! as I mark thy state,
The beauty, grandeur that is thine;
How can I doubt thy wonders great
Are fashioned by a hand divine?
For who but God could e'er conceive
The dread immensity of space,
And universal glory weave
Upon a void and empty base?

THE RUINED NUNNERY.

—x—

The sun, with dying glory, sinks to rest
Upon the crimson bosom of the West,
And dusky twilight, gathers still and gray,
To fill the place left vacant by the day:
Lo! in the East revolving in its light,
The moon appears upon the crest of night,
Emitting sparks of silver that descend,
Till in the gloom their glowing splendors end;
And here where nature in her beauty seems
A glorious ideal of artistic dreams:
An ancient, moss-grown pile that once arose,
Its plain but massive grandeur to disclose;
Lies crumbling 'neath the hand of cold decay,
That time ordains in its destructive sway.
Within these walls where silence now doth reign,
Save for the night-bird's soft melodious strain,
Or for the breeze, sweet censer of the rose,
That gently murmurs through the night's repose:
Once dwelt in holiness, and perfect peace,
Far from the tumult of the world's increase,
A band of nuns, like beings half divine,
In secret worship at a sacred shrine:
Where they communed with God's eternal throne;
With prayer and fasting seeking to atone
For nature's heritage of sin and shame,
Till death to end their mortal service came,
And bore their spirits unto endless rest,
To dream in bliss with the immortal blest.
How often, at the closing of the day,
As night approached in shadowy array,
Each black-robed nun would issue from her cell
With voice and heart the vesper praise to swell,
And every soul and spirit would unite
In thoughts as pure as heaven's holy light,

As through the silent cloister's wonted calm
Arose the stanza of a sacred psalm,
Until these vaults were ringing with the praise
That old and young were joining to upraise.
E'en now they seem to rise before my sight,
Saintly and pallid in the ghostly light;
Some old and bent by age's wearing hand
Seem on the gloomy brink of death to stand;
While others full of youthful beauty seem
As fair and radiant as an angel's dream.
But now these beings slumber with the past:
Nought that is mortal can forever last;
For life is but the pathway mortals wend
To reach their common destiny and end.
Behold yon crucifix that glimmers white
Beneath the pale moon's soft, ethereal light!
How many times have beings pure and fair,
Bowed down in holiness to worship here—
Their cold lips pressing to the colder stone
In homage rendered to the higher throne.
Now nature only, through her right divine,
Doth worship at this still remaining shrine.
And lo! this slab of marble white behold;
Upon its stony surface, dull and cold,
Perchance some noble woman laid her head,
Unto the social world forever dead,
Save for the passion throbbing in her breast,
That left her soul no sense of peace or rest:
Here worn with long devotion, sad and deep,
She sought to rest her weary brain in sleep,
While in the great world's swiftly moving throng,
Some frantic lover bore his grief along:
His true heart breaking on its rack of pain,
As for her love he longed and sighed in vain,
Until his soul succumbing to its grief,
Found in its own destruction its relief:
And she in bitter agony of mind,
Lived out the life she had herself designed.

Alas, with nature's blessing not content,
Upon an ideal holy she was bent;
 In vain she sought the peace for which she longed;
 Her thirsting soul her woman's heart had wronged,
And thus her nature, for a time subdued,
Awoke with all its passion'd love renewed.
 They who are always seeking seldom find,
 Because imagination strains the mind,
And expectation wanders off afar
To grasp at things as distant as a star.

FAREWELL.

—x—

“Farewell,” alas! thou art the saddest word
That from the mortal tongue was ever heard;
So strained and woful in thine effort vain,
To hide with seeming cheer, thy burst of pain;
So fraught with hope that struggles with despair,
Whose conflict o’er the heart strings rage and tear,
Till all the soul vibrates with silent grief,
That in expression cannot find relief,
Thou art a wish of good, yet thou wast born
When friends in sorrow were asunder torn,
When kindred souls were rudely forced to part,
With tearful eye, with bruised and bleeding heart;
And yet thy reign of sorrow finds an end,
When once again in joy, friend meets with friend.

CHRISTMAS CHIMES.

—x—

Come, take the holly and the pine,
The spruce, the cedar and the bay,
And fadeless garlands deftly twine,
While birds chant forth a Christmas lay.

'The natal day of Christ! The bells
In wild tones sound the message forth,
Till every wind with music swells
Through East and West, through South and North.

Ye iron-tongued messengers of peace!
Strike all your notes of deepest power;
Let not your joyous utterance cease,
But speak from every belfry tower.

O'er city, village, forest, brake;
O'er mountain, valley, desert, field;
O'er river, streamlet, brook and lake—
Let your glad messages be pealed.

While ye send out wild notes of praise,
In symphonies that reach the sky,
A thousand mortal choirs raise
Their joyous voices to reply.

While in the unseen realm above,
Celestial spirits ever sing,
In notes of tenderness and love;
To Christ, the world's immortal king.

Joy everlasting—what a theme!
It strikes and startles all the soul;
'Tis perfect as an angel's dream;
Death-shadows, from its beauty, roll.

THE DYING TECUMSEH.

—x—

Stretched on the earth with grievous wound
 Tecumseh dying lay;
 His warriors had gathered round
 As slowly fled the day.

With dark and gloomy brows the braves
 Gave token of their grief,
 And swore to make a thousand graves
 In vengeance for their chief.

Upon his arm Tecumseh raised,
 And on the forest green,
 With fading sight, he sadly gazed
 In yearning on the scene.

"My life has been like yonder oak,
 Uprooted by the storm,"
 He faintly said, and, as he spoke,
 Emotion shook his form.

"Once it, a slender sapling, grew
 Into a mighty tree:
 Refreshed at night by sparkling dew
 It lived in majesty;

"But then, the north-wind, fierce and loud,
 Raged round its earthly bed,
 Until its stately head was bowed,
 And it was lying dead.

"Thus once in happiness I reigned
 Among my native race,
 Until our lands were sought and gained
 By the accurst pale-face.

“Then, with my warriors, I sought
Their inroads to withstand,
And every brave with valor fought
To save his native land.

“But fighting is of no avail,
The pale-face triumphs still,
He claims each hill and flowered dale,
And takes them at his will.

“My braves, once mighty as the bear,
And as the eagle free,
Now from the pale-face dogs, in fear,
Are often forced to flee.

“Ye fields and forests wild, farewell!
My spirit soon will flee
To lands where my forefathers dwell
In love and unity!

“There are the happy hunting-grounds
Where peaceful rivers flow,
And where the war-whoop ne’er resounds,
Nor comes the pale-face foe.

“Farewell.” Down drooped his weary head,
And, as he ceased to speak,
His brave and noble spirit fled,
Immortal life to seek.

The moon crept from her gloomy bed,
And looked in sadness down
Upon Tecumseh, lying dead,
And wove for him a crown.

TO AN ENGLISH LADY.

—x—

Fain would we pause ere bidding thee farewell,
Yet time bides not the feelings of the heart;
And while with vain regret our bosoms swell,
We must, perforce, from thee in sadness part.

When o'er the mighty ocean swiftly bounds
The stately ship that soon must bear thee hence;
When naught around thee but the sea abounds,
May Nature sweetly smile in thy defense.

May all the sky present an azure crest,
The glowing sun make glorious the day,
And may the briny ocean's mighty breast
Heave with a gentle yet majestic sway.

May all the stars with iridescent light,
The silver-pinioned moon—that mystic orb—
Gleam o'er thy watery pathway through the night,
Till with their beams the shadows they absorb.

And when, perchance, at eve thou fall'st asleep,
May dreams of those whom thou hast left behind,
Into thy memory through the silence creep,
Till in thy heart a resting place they find.

A SYLVAN SCENE.

—x—

What matchless beauty wreathed in Nature's smiles,
Here lifts its wonders to the raptured gaze,
Whose mystic charm, impressive, deep, beguiles
The soul to revel in its beauteous maze.

Behold yon tiny streamlet! how it winds
Through hill and valley like a chain of gold,
As on its waves the sun effulgent finds
A glass wherein his glory to behold.

Lo! yonder hills, that raise their lofty heights,
Crowned all with clusters of majestic pines;
Wrapped in a bluish haze that veils the lights
Shot from the orb that westward now declines.

The verdant fields where flowers wild abound,
Arbutus, daisy, buttercup and rose,
Stretch from the spot in richness all around,
Like some sweet realm of fairyland repose.

And in the distance looms the forest old,
Where ancient trees like kings in state arrayed,
Display their leaves of crimson, brown and gold,
That Autumn soon will leave to droop and fade.

Above, the sky is beautiful and clear,
Save for a mazy cloud of crimson hue,
That like a moving island doth appear!
Set in an ocean vast of softest blue.

O list! whence comes that music's passionate stream,
In rich cadences, silvery and sweet,
That murmuring winds like spirits, half in dream,
With mystic, rhythmic, measure low repeat.

Perchance it is some fairy minstrel choir,
Half mad with nature's majesty and grace;
An angel's soul outpoured upon his lyre,
Deep ringing through the airy realm of space.

Or yet the sirens with sweet luring strain,
Come from their rocky palace in the sea;
Seeking for conquest in a new domain,
To picture joys and dreams that ne'er can be.

But nay, methinks I know the music well;
All vonder woodland with it seems to thrill,
For there the feathered songsters' bosoms swell,
With praises caroled to their Maker's will.

MY IDEAL.

—x—

What dreamy beauty dwells with lustre bright
 Within the dark-blue splendor of thine eyes,
 To thrill the soul with passionate delight,
 Till all the spirit speaks in rapturous sighs!

Thy lips are like a rosebud half in bloom:
 Soft with the dewy kisses of the wind,
 And redolent with ravishing perfume—
 Inviting, witching, maddening, but kind.

A mass of golden glory is thy hair,
 That like a crown adorns thy shapely head;
 And in those amber tresses, soft and fair,
 The moon, weaves gleaming nets of glinting thread.

Rose-tinted are thy cheeks, whereon, like gold,
 The lashes of thy splendent eyes downfall;
 Pure is thy brow, and beauteous to behold;
 Thy form is perfect, graceful, stately, tall.

Thy gentle bosom is so soft and white,
 Where once I saw thee hold a weary dove,
 That it might rest ere it resumed its flight;
 Sweet, tender-hearted maid, thou art my love!

CHRISTMAS WANDERINGS.

—x—

'Tis Christmas Eve, sweet love, and all the world
 Vibrates with joy; the moon, majestic, bright,
 In all her regal glory sits impearled,
 Upon the sable brow of dreamy night.

List to the church bell's deep and solemn toll,
 Upon the wind's great pinions stately borne;
 'Tis but the prelude of the jingling roll,
 That musical will burst upon the morn.

Come love, and wander out beneath the stars,
That with eternal fire lustrous beam;
List to the mystic wind's æolian bars;
'Tis Nature murmuring in some wondrous dream.

The perfume of the cedar and the pine,
Enravishes the night with fragrance rare:
Take thou some holly, love, and deftly twine
The green and crimson into garlands fair.

Pause here awhile, sweet one, and let me place
These blood-red berries on your golden hair,
To match the roses of your lovely face;
Then like a Christmas nymph you will appear.

If Nature has a soul where joy supreme,
Can swell with ecstasy its passion deep,
Then through her being on this hallowed e'en,
A flood of rapture must unbounded leap.

Lo! o'er yon mountain's top, where shadows frown,
A star, with light celestial, ab'aze,
Like some rich diadem from Nature's crown,
Unto the earth its majesty displays.

It is the glittering star of Christmas morn;
What glory great within its orbit reigns;
As on its azure throne it sits new-born,
A million bells break forth in joyous strains.

Love, though thy form may moulder and decay,
Thy beauty perish like a rapturous dream,
Thy gentle spirit pass from earth away,
Beyond death's black and gloom-accursed stream:

Yet, art thou not forever lost to me,
For if I read yon shining star aright,
There is a world where I may follow thee;
Unto whose day this life is but the night

THE OCEAN.

—x—

Vast Ocean! as upon thy realm I gaze,
Beholding all thy greatness, nature-born,
Wrapped in the boundaries of an azure haze,
Nursed in the lap of centuries out-worn:

My throbbing heart with silent wonder fills;
My spirit with thy beauty is beguiled;
My startled soul with deep emotion thrills,
Before thy rugged grandeur, fierce and wild.

Thy billows dash foam-crested in the sun,
In mad career contending for the way,
Till bursting as they meet, forthwith is spun
An iridescent cloud of falling spray.

What mighty storms have o'er thy surface swept;
Fresh from the passioned deeps of Nature's heart;
When thy great billows fiercely, madly leapt,
Thus to the gale their grandeur to impart.

How many countless vessels thou hast borne
Upon thy bosom, heaving as with might;
How often hast thou hurled them crushed and torn,
To perish on the rocks in awful plight.

How short is mortal life compared to thine;
How many generations from their goal
Have reached their growth and suffered their decline,
Since first thy waves began their ceaseless roll.

Roll on with rumbling roar, O mighty deep!
In all your majesty and power great;
While to eternity the ages sweep,
Still thou shalt roll in all thy boundless state.

WOLFE.

—x—

Like a hero he stood with his sword raised on high,
And his voice ringing loud o'er the battle's deep roar,
While the gleam of defiance flashed forth from his eye,
As his army to victory boldly he bore.

Fierce the clash of the steel, fierce and deadly the blow,
As the sabres shone crimson with torrents of blood:
Fierce and hot the encounter, as foe met with foe,
But still like a hero he dauntlessly stood.

Well he knew, as he fought in the battle's red heat,
That all fame is a worthless reward for the brave;
For his lips that immortal verse fain would repeat,
That the pathways of glory lead but to the grave.

But 'twas duty impelled him to take up the sword
In defense of his country when sore was her need,
And 'twas thus for her honor he valiantly warred,
And 'twas thus for her sake he did suffer and bleed.

Like a hero he fell in the tumult of strife,
When the bellowing cannon, with thunderous boom,
Breathed its havoc and deadly destruction to life,
Like a horrible key note of terror and doom.

Noble Wolfe! Rest forever in silence and peace,
For thy memory shall ever be sacredly kept;
Time can never thine honor and glory decrease;
All the tears shed for thee have been worthily wept.

A SERENADE.

—x—

O lady fair! my song I tune to thee:
List to its tender pleading, love, I pray;
Let not its burden, deep-impassioned, be
Upon the night-wind heedless borne away.

I call, sweet love, oh, answer thou my sighs!
Come wander down beside the limpid lake
That at the base of yonder mountain lies;
Oh, answer, love, why dost thou not awake?

Dim night hath thrown her shade-embroidered cloak,
Incrusted with a million gleaming stars,
About the earth, and list! it doth invoke
The nightingale to sound his silvery bars.

The moon in all her regal splendor beams,
Throned in the lucent circle of her light,
To guide the world, plunged in its maze of dreams,
Throughout the mystic realm of dusky night.

The rose is breathing in its native vales,
And from its crimson bosom, gemmed with dew,
An odor rich and ravishing exhales,
That with its sweetness doth the breezes woo.

The stately lily in its beauty white,
Beside the hyacinth and tulip blooms,
Wherewith the tuberose joins to fill the night
With deep, voluptuous and rare perfumes.

All Nature seems to whisper words of love,
To call thee from thy couch of snowy lace:
And e'en the flutter of a restless dove,
Seems born of longing to behold thy face!

Then let not subtle slumber fly with thee
Unto the dream-bound world of visions bright;
But, gentle lady, let thy presence be
The brightest star in all the realm of night.

PHASES OF A NIGHT.

—x—

'Twas almost midnight: o'er the mountains hung
A sable crown of clouds, whose circling form.
A sheet of rain in torrents downward flung
Upon the lands encompassed by the storm.

The angry wind, in harsh, discordant tones,
Raged with the grandeur of its giant force;
O'erthrowing kingly oaks from forest thrones,
And wrecking all that dared oppose its course.

Oppressive gloom, in melancholy state,
Like some dark majesty of regions drear,
In conquest held the kingdom where so late,
The sun in glory crimson did appear.

Not one faint glimmer of celestial light,
Gleamed through the dread immensity of space:
Not one small star shone on the crest of night,
Nor blazed upon the heaven's dusky face.

When, lo! as though by touch divine, the clouds
Were burst asunder, and the restless wind
Caught up the fragments, massed in sable crowds,
And swept out into regions unconfined.

Then what a vision spread before the gaze!
The vast blue dome of heaven glorified!
A million stars flashed in a brilliant maze
That night's dark wing was powerless to hide!

And sloping down unto her western bed,
The blood-red moon, in splendor, regal, round,
Upon the scene her dying glory shed,
And with her lustrous light the hill-tops crowned.

The dripping trees, all glistening with rain,
Incrusted seemed with gems of dazzling light,
Wherein the fire-flies wrought a golden chain,
Framed by the ebon coloring of night.

And through the dreamy hush that softly fell
Upon the dying echoes of the blast,
The night-bird's song was heard to sweetly swell,
As though rejoicing that the storm was past.

WINTER.

—x—

Ye forests old, majestic, wild and deep!
Your trees their branches cold and bare upraise;
Your densest haunt where hart and roebuck sleep,
Is but a leafless, grim and tangled maze.

Your scarlet robes embroidered rich with gold,
Wherein the Autumn clothed ye in such state,
The raging blasts of Winter fierce and cold,
Have torn away to leave ye desolate.

Lo! all the meadows are bereft of green;
Not one small flower wild and crowned with dew,
Uplifts its head to beautify the scene,
Stern death its fatal course doth here pursue.

The barren hills loom through the distant haze,
That morning wraps around their lofty peaks,
Lo! one high top with glory meets the gaze,
Its snow-crown crimson with the sunlight streaks.

I pause beside some lone sequestered glade,
In hopes of hearing birds in floods of song,
But all is hushed and still; no sound is made;
For southward have the songsters sped along.

Yet, though the Summer's beauty all hath flown,
Still Nature's soul of grandeur doth remain;
The glory now departed from her throne
Doth but enhance the greatness of her reign.

Still doth she rule in majesty and state,
Like some eternal queen of beauty rare,
Who from the raging storms of adverse fate,
Comes forth in beauty, ravishing and fair.

RETRIBUTION.

—x—

Oh, how often in the twilight, as the evening shadows grew
Into shapes and forms fantastic, like a shadowland review;

Creeping over yonder mountain, as it towered into space,
Till its rigid outline trembled in a shadowy embrace,

Have I lingered on the lake-shore, by the side of gentle
Ruth,
While my heart was wildly throbbing with the passion of
my youth,

Speaking words of deep expression, audible to us alone,
Save the wind as it repeated them with soft æolian tone;

And how often in the evening, as the moon—that lucent
orb—
Sought with beams of silvery beauty every shadow to
absorb,

Would she sit at yonder casement, 'neath its arch of ivy
green,
Gazing with her dreamy eyes upon the bright celestial
queen.

Ah, the memories of those moments stir my soul and heat
my blood,
Coming o'er my troubled spirit in a great o'erwhelming
flood.

All is gone, and gone forever, naught but vain regret
remains;
While a deed of dark and bitter wrong my soul and con-
science stains.

It was jealousy the action prompted, jealousy of Ruth:
O how evil is the impulse that doth govern thoughtless
youth.

'Twas my friend, my dearest friend, alas! my rival proved
to be,
Yet, how could he help from loving one so fair and pure as
she?

Ah, 'twas so indeed, in jealous rage, O curse the luckless
day!

My best friend, but yet my rival, in mine anger did I slay;

'Then in fear of retribution, from my home I straightway
fled,

Till my long and lengthened absence led my friends to
think me dead.

Would 'twere so, for after many weary years I now return
But to find those things forever gone for which my soul
doth yearn.

Here hath death, with all its dread and sombre doom per-
formed its end,

Scarcely leaving in its pathway one familiar face or friend;

She is dead for whom I ruined life; how poignant is my
grief!

Nothing do I find but torture where I turn to seek relief.

What a world is this we live in, what a luckless state to
gain:

Paying for a single action with a life of bitter pain.

How I dread to meet the future, that resistless in its
course,

Nothing holds for me but sorrow and the burden of remorse.

ROSE.

—x—

The setting sun, resplendent to behold,
With all its wondrous glory, red and gold,
Had westward o'er the Rocky Mountains passed,
Whose shadow grim, gigantic, outward cast,
Lay on the prairie like the wing of night,
Preparing to invade the realm of light,
As through a stream whose winding waters lay,
Bright with the dying splendor of the day,
My gallant charger plunged and safely bore
His eager master to the western shore.
Oh, how I longed to reach the fort that lay
Still distant veiled in shadows gathering gray:
Oh, how I longed, as swiftly on I pressed,
To clasp once more unto my throbbing breast
My darling Rosel the colonel's daughter, she
Had sworn some joyous day my wife to be;
Sworn with those vows that love alone can form,
That from the heart come leaping, tender, warm,
To meet responses fraught with deepest joy,
But which, a word, alas, may soon destroy.
In anger had we parted on that morn;
I vexed and stern; she flushed with haughty scorn:
'Twas all my fault; I bade her not to ride
A vicious mustang she had never tried,
And she in answer tossed her golden head,
Her blue eyes flashing as she proudly said,
"I were unfitted for a soldier's bride,
If any pony I should fear to ride."
Whereat, with lover-like solicitude,
My mind became with greater fear imbued;
My anxious heart to dangers new awoke,
And in a stern, commanding way I spoke,
Till she, with angry words and haughty mien,
Swept from my presence like an injured queen:

Yet, as she turned away, a burning tear
I saw upon her crimson cheek appear;
My heart gave one deep throb of bitter pain,
But in this life how oft regret is vain,
For as I turned to follow her and seek
To woo the flush of anger from her cheek,
And for my sins a thousand pardons pray,
A soldier's duty ordered me away:
So in my breast I stifled back a sigh.
And called my horse that stood impatient by,
Then with my heart torn by emotion's sway,
In duty's stern behalf I rode away.
Oh, what a day of misery I spent,
With all my tortured feelings inward pent;
Yet onward o'er the plains I swiftly sped,
Although my wounded heart in anguish bled;
And now, as homeward eagerly I pressed,
I could not of its gloom my soul divest;
But soon, I thought, such feelings would be o'er,
When to my heart I'd clasp my love once more;
When her soft eyes, with love-light all aglow,
Would with her soul's emotions overflow,
Until with lips we sealed in mortal bliss,
Our reconciliation with a kiss.
Now through the shadows of impending night,
I saw the fort just looming into sight;
A minute more, and at the fortress gate,
I checked my steed, its opening to wait:
Yet, ere I gave the signal to the guard,
Lo! I beheld the entrance was unbarred!
Unbarred and broken, and no sentry's word
Gave token my arrival had been heard:
Dismounting, in I passed with hasty tread;
My bosom filled with anxious fear and dread,
O horror! what a grim and ghastly sight
Arose like some wild phantasy of night!
A scene of death I scarce could realize;
My comrades there lay dead before my eyes:

They who so lusty seemed upon the morn
For naught but vigor and for action born,
Now lay before me nevermore to rise,
With gaping wounds and wildly staring eyes.
O God! how strange it seems that things so drear
Must burst the mortal heart with grim despair.
But Rose! the thought flashed through my heated brain
With one mad sweep of torture and of pain:
Oh, heaven! what has been her fate? I groaned:
The wind as though in answer sobbed and moaned:
I feared to think, lest I perchance should see
A fate far worse than death could ever be;
I knew the Indian her life would spare
But that he might the maid to bondage bear.
My tortured heart beat with a heavy throb,
And from my breast arose a bitter sob.
I searched in desperation of despair
Among the forms that lay so silent there;
But all my anxious efforts were for naught;
I found no trace of her for whom I sought.
The moon had risen and beneath its light,
I found the trail that marked the Indians' flight:
Half-mad, I turned, the wretches to pursue,
When something on the ramparts caught my view:
A fair, white form, crowned with a mass of gold!
My heart with new-born fear grew dull and cold:
With hasty strides I mounted to the place,
And with dear Rose I stood there face to face:
She saw me not, no welcome word expressed;
A ghastly bullet wound was in her breast!
And 'neath the flag whose folds the breezes swelled,
Her form in rigid beauty was upheld
By cruel cords wherewith she had been bound
Unto the staff: such was the wreck I found.
My brain with agonized pulsations beat,
And there I fell heart-broken at her feet.

DEATH.

—x—

Death! gloomy messenger of mortal doom,
 Inevitable destiny of man;
 Monarch of monarchs, ruler of all thrones!
 Wide as the universe is thy domain;
 Thy prestige is eternal and complete;
 Thou bane of life, thou art thyself imbued
 With an existence endless as thy woes:
 Where there is life and being thou wilt reign
 'The paramount transgressor of their laws,
 While Evolution, with its wondrous sway,
 Builds up a stage whereon thou canst perform.
 With what an innate fear and common dread
 Doth every being gaze upon thy face,
 Stamped, as it is, with all its hated gloom.
 Oh, dread and cold are thine embracing arms,
 As, circling round the heart with icy clasp,
 They cause the life-blood to its action cease,
 Until the spirit and the body part.
 But whither dost thou lead—what spirit-worlds,
 (Reared in the splendor of aerial state,
 With burning stars beneath their vast expanse
 To form a fitting base for majesty,)
 Doth thy dark shades unpromising conceal,
 To shield their glories from the mortal eye?
 What is the mission, mystical and dread,
 Thou dost fulfil to such a dreary end?
 Black-crested monarch from a distant world,
 Give but a prescience of the fate unknown
 To which thou ledest disembodied souls
 Veiled in thy somber, yet majestic shade,
 Beyond the portals of mortality.
 O Death! I prithee, but for once relent,
 And deign to vest thy silent self with voice,
 And with prophetic trueness speak to me.
 Unto what state dost thou an entrance give?
 Is there a world, ethereal and bright,

Where joyous angels, snowy-pinioned, wait
 To swing the silver gates of endless day,
 And usher in the pure, ambitious soul
 Amidst a halo of magnificence,
 To dream in mazes of eternal bliss?
 Or, is it all a dream—a vacant dream,
 Where a'l is lost, and lost forever more?
 Without existence, without hope or love,
 Without emotion, be it joy or pain,
 Without a mind where thought can have its range,
 Without a spirit, passionate or calm—
 Oh, poignant is the thought—without a soul!
 But nay, when on the mighty universe
 I turn my gaze, and wonder fills my brain,
 As I review the grandeur of the work,
 The mass of life and vital force involved,
 Imagination 'neath the burden bends,
 And every faculty amazed proclaims,
 Such great creations cannot come to naught!

A VIOLET.

—x—

Beside a lucid stream whose murmur seems
 Like music flowing from an unknown tongue,
 Wooed by the wind into æolian themes,
 Whose strains, for countless ages have been sung;
 There is a mossy bank, whose verdant crest
 Is grown with richest flowers, dark and rare;
 And here a violet—queen of the rest—
 Waves in the soft, aroma-freighted air.
 When day emerges from the shades of night,
 It lifts its head, aglow with sparkling dew,
 To drink the warm, invigorating light;
 Unfolding petals of the richest blue:

When night appears, in shadows all arrayed,
To put fair day unto a gloomy end,
This tender flower, like a frightened maid,
Doth on its mother—earth— for strength depend:
And this sweet gift of Nature's charming grace,
Fain would I tender to a maiden fair,
And bid her in its loveliness to trace
The deep reflection of her beauty rare.

THE LAKE.

—x—

Fair, crystal lake, embraced by mountains high,
Thou art the bed in which the fairies dream—
The mirror that reflects the changing sky,
And paints in beauty rare the lightning's gleam.
The sun converts thee to a sheet of gold,
In which the bending trees their leaves inlay,
Like emeralds set in a shining mould,
And o'er thy bosom breezes softly play:
When night approaches with her dusky shroud,
Enveloping the earth in mystic gloom,
The pallid moon breaks through some fleecy cloud,
While thou a cloak of silver dost assume.
The distant stars kiss thee with mellow light,
And crown thee as with jewels, sparkling, bright.

A WISH.

—x—

Would that some airy, gauzy-pinioned sprite,
 With rosebud lips and deepest violet eyes,
 Would, for a season, grant the mystic right,
 Her powers magical to exercise.

Then, from the fairy kingdom I would steal
 A galaxy of softest shades and hues,
 Implore the Queen her wonders to reveal,
 And with her mystic spirit all infuse.

Then, with some fairy-painter's brush of art,
 Invested with a power, potent, rare,
 I'd seek the inspiration from my heart,
 And paint thee, love, in all thy beauty fair.

THE NEW YEAR.

—x—

In deep and mournful tones the midnight bell
 Bids to the dying year a sad farewell,
 Which leaves the earth in Time's unceasing care,
 And on the pinions of the fitful blast,
 Flies to the annals of the lifeless past,
 Though none its still departure see or hear;
 And while the trembling echoes of the bell
 Upon the night in wild cadences swell,
 In tuneful combat with the restless winds,
 Another year is born, and all the earth
 With joyous chimes doth welcome in its birth,
 And mankind for his loss a solace finds.
 Though with the old year we are loth to part,
 We greet the New Year with a joyous heart.

REALITY.

—x—

We dream; and paint thought-pictures fair and sweet,
And in conception have our joys complete:

O'er pleasures muse, imagination-wrought,

Where hopes exist with rapture, beauty, fraught;

But ah! when time the consummation brings,

We find that fancy soars on ideal wings,

Whose flight reality cannot pursue,

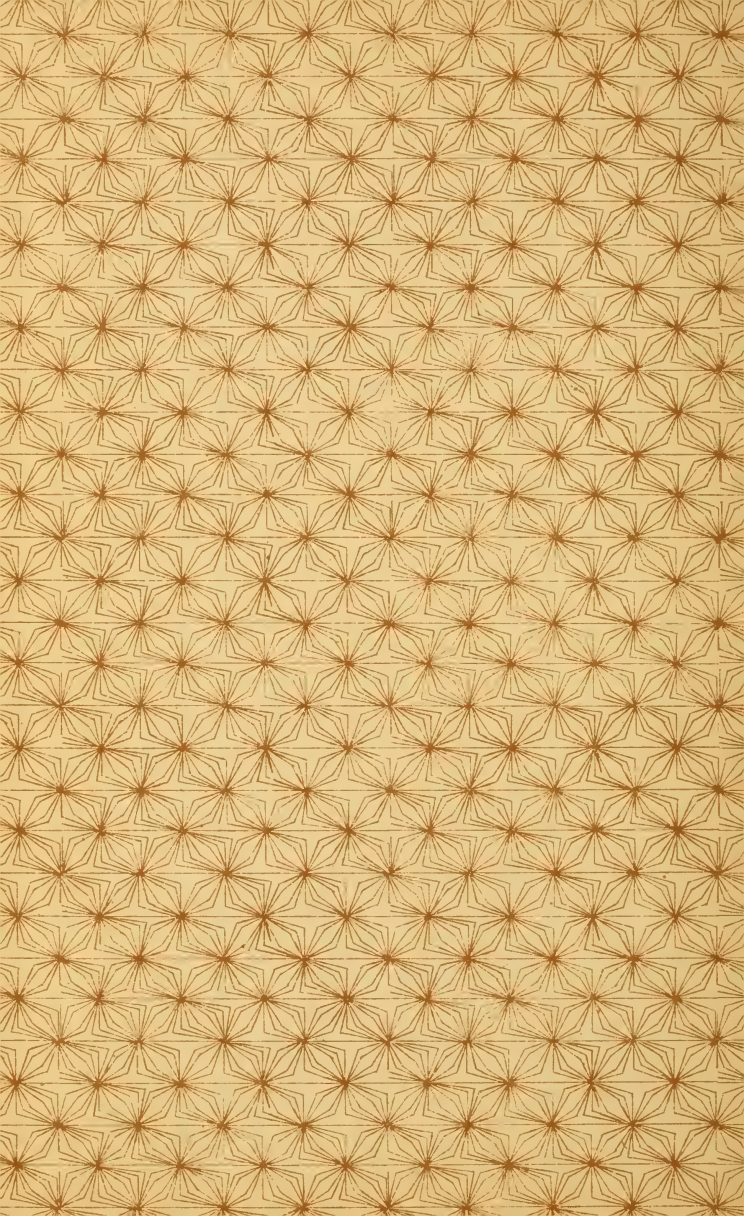
But brings our frailties into clearer view:

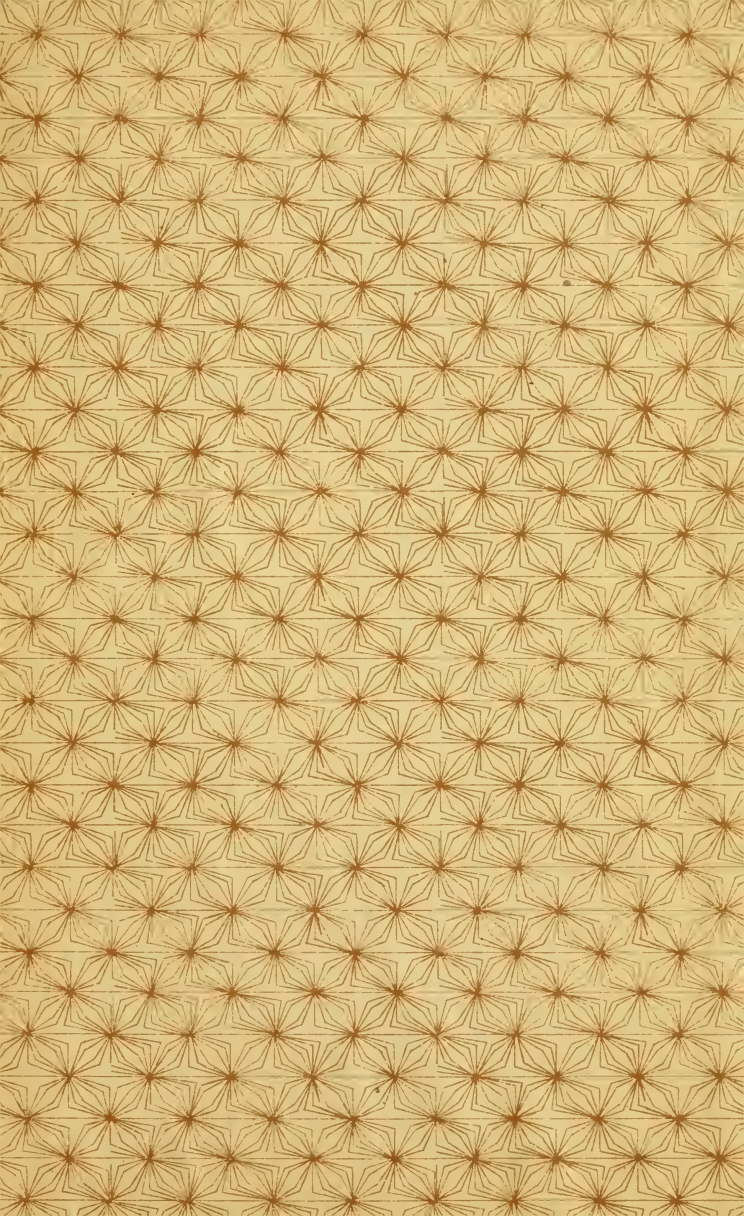
Our souls our mortal impotence deplore

With clamors wild, but what can we do more?

FINIS.







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